MY FIGHT FOR BIRTH CONTROL

Margaret Sanger

Books by

MARGARET SANGER

What Every Girl Should Know
What Every Mother Should Know
The Case for Birth Control
Woman and the New Race
The Pivot of Civilization
Woman, Morality and Birth Control
Happiness in Marriage
What Every Boy and Girl Should Know
Motherhood in Bondage

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FARRAR & RINEHART
INCORPORATED
On Murray Hill - - - New York

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I

BACKGROUND

SOME lives drift here and there like reeds in a stream, depending on changing currents for their activity. Others are like swimmers knowing the depth of the water. Each stroke helps them onward to a definite objective.

In one of the earlier years of my lecturing for birth control, some one came to me and asked me how long it had taken me to prepare my lecture. "About fourteen years!" I replied without hesitation.

As I look back upon my life, I see that every part of it was a preparation for the next. The most trivial of incidents fits into the larger pattern like a mosaic in a preconceived design. It seems to me that every person with whom I came into contact left an impression, or instilled into my life an influence that definitely formed a part of this design.

It becomes clearer and clearer to me that it has always been the depth of my belief, my faith, or my love that was the mainspring of my behavior. When once I believed in doing a thing, nothing could prevent my doing it.

This characteristic was born in me. I see it expressing itself strongly in the decisive actions of my childhood. If, as the psychologists insist, the pattern of our lives is set for us at the age of three, then surely it is worth while to review those years when the determining influences were outlining the larger patterns of life.

I

Mother bore eleven children; she died at forty-eight. My father lived until he was eighty. Her name was Purcell. His was Higgins.

Mother was straight as an arrow, with head well set on sloping shoulders. Her eyes were far apart, gray-green, flecked with amber; her wavy hair was black, her skin white and spotless. She was never stout, nor ever inclined to stoutness.

She had a selfless courage, the kind that prompted her to get up in the night to fetch a glass of water for feverish children, going, without a light, to the kitchen pump so that the water would be cooler and fresher for parched lips. Her adventures into the kitchen at night were often startling enough to thwart a less courageous woman. On one occasion she stumbled over a man sprawled out on the floor, a tramp who had come through the unlocked kitchen door. Father had principles against private property and locked doors, and when he was the last one to bed the doors were left unlocked.

When Mother realized there was a sleeping tramp on the floor, she ran back to the bedroom, awakened Father with the news, and told him he must get up and put the man out. Father turned over on his side, listened to the complaint, and sleepily said: "Oh, let him alone. The poor devil needs sleep, like the rest of us."

Mother, fearless and independent, went back alone into the kitchen for a lamp, intending to oust the intruder. The tramp was gone. He had opened the window and escaped.

This was in Corning, New York, where I came into this world, one of eleven children, and the sixth-born.

Corning is known for the manufacture of glass, the fame of which has gone far for beauty of design and texture. Huge factories lined the flats bordering on the river. Hundreds of men and women, girls and boys, worked there. Three generations have toiled their lives away making lamp chimneys, electric bulbs and other articles for the nation's daily needs. The city is in the Chemung Valley, with hills extending far up to Steuben County to the Lake District. The city is divided by the river, and in my memory the workers and the poor people of the factory lived on the flats near the river or near the factory, while the owners of the factories and people of wealth lived on the hills away from the railroads and factories. I noticed, too, that the people down below, the factory people, had large families, many children, while those on the hills had few.

Very early in my childhood I associated poverty, toil, unemployment, drunkenness, cruelty, quarreling, fighting, debts, jails with large families.

The people who lived on the hilltops owned their homes, had few children, dressed them well, and kept their houses and their yards clean and tidy. Mothers of the hills played croquet and tennis with their husbands in the evening. They walked hand in hand with their children through the streets to shop for suitable clothing. They were young looking mothers, with pretty, clean dresses, and they smelled of perfume. I often watched them at play as I looked through the gates in passing. I was often invited to spend Saturday afternoon with children on the hill, played games with them, told them fairy tales and invented stories for their amusement.

Mother expected a man to be the guardian of his home, but Father never was that. Mother's courage was physical. She it was who always routed the tramps, chicken thieves, the burglars and the prowlers. She it was who faced the school teachers who whipped her children, and gave them a piece of her mind. She separated fighting men, fighting boys and

fighting dogs. She entered all combats fearlessly when her own precious ones were in danger or involved.

Father, on the contrary, never bothered his head about physical fights—unless it might be a dog fight; his Irish sportsmanship cropped out then. He, however, was fearless in mental battles, and it was from him I learned the value of freedom of speech and personal liberty. He fought for free libraries, free education, free books in the public schools, and freedom of the mind from dogma and cant. He came from Ireland and was descended from a long line of fighting, poetic ancestors, some from the north, some from the south of that shamrock land. He was of medium build with fair, freckled skin, reddish hair, blue eyes set close together, a massive, shapely head, long upper lip and a mouth expressing generosity, wit and humor. In the Civil War he fought under Sherman, enlisting at seventeen, and at the end was honorably discharged. He was a philosopher, a rebel, an artist. He made a living by chiseling angels and saints out of huge blocks of marble or granite for tombstones in cemeteries.

The Catholics were his best patrons, but he did not agree with Catholicism. He resented its clutch upon the human mind, its intolerance of reason, its abject subservience to Rome. He argued and debated on the side of reason, and influenced other men to resent the interference of the Church with progress of the mind. His friends were the artisans of the community—cabinet makers, shoemakers, masons, carpenters—and teachers, doctors and priests. Together they met and talked often and long into the night.

Books were few and scarce. In our own house we had the Bible, a "History of the World," a book on phrenology (Fuller's), Aesop's "Fables," "Gulliver's Travels," a medical book mainly about physiology, Tom Moore's "Lalla Rookh," and the latest book on the shelf was Henry George's "Progress and Poverty."

Father joined the Knights of Labor, and his anti-Catholic attitude did not make for his popularity in a community

mainly Irish. About this time came Bob Ingersoll's ringing challenge to dogmas and creeds, and Father organized a meeting one Sunday afternoon for the orator. When the hour came to open the hall, the crowd outside howled and cheered, but the doors did not open. The only hall in the town was owned by the Catholic priest as private property, and while Father had rented and paid for the use of it, when the reverend father learned the speaker was Ingersoll he barred the doors.

The waiting crowd was divided, some serious minded who came to hear and learn, others who came to denounce. Then began a free for all fight. The hoodlums pelted the leaders with tomatoes, apples and cabbage stumps. Father and Mr. Ingersoll led the way through the side streets to the outskirts of the town, announcing that the meeting would take place in the woods an hour later. This woodland was near our own house, and I was thrilled to see Father standing up to speak and introduce the famous orator. Father held me by the hand as he walked proudly through the howling mob to the woods on the outskirts of the newly made city. I felt proud, too.

From that day on the Catholic priest was his enemy. No more angels to be carved out of stone or granite, if the priest had anything to say about it. We were known, from this time on, as children of the Devil, atheists and heretics. Catholic children called us names and made faces as they passed our house. The fight of the fathers extended to the younger generation.

This all affected the earnings of the breadwinner. Truth, freedom to express his ideas, freedom to hear new ideas were challenged by the fear of hunger. The aged priest of the community called to see my mother, and begged her to use her influence with Father to refrain from his evil ways. He implored her to send her children to his church and to the parochial school and to stand firm against the intrusion of atheism and godlessness. Mother must have suffered from the conflict. Before her marriage she had gone regularly to

church, but association with Father, a freethinker, carried her away, and she never attended the Roman Catholic church services again.

Father was constantly discussing religion and challenging creed and dogmas. I often sat in and listened to the discussions; it seemed to me my father always had the best of every argument.

One night about this time when my sister and I were dutifully saying our prayers, we knelt together on the floor and repeated the Lord's Prayer. When we had finished we climbed on Father's chair to kiss him "goodnight," and he said fondly: "What was that I heard you saying about bread?"

"Why, Father, that was in the Lord's Prayer: 'Give us this day our daily bread.' "

"Who were you talking to?" he parried.

"To God," I replied.

"Is God a baker?" he asked.

I was shocked, dumbfounded. Nevertheless I rallied to the attack and replied as best I could, doubtless influenced by conversations I had heard.

"No, of course not," I said. "It means the rain, the sunshine and all the things to make the wheat, which makes the bread."

"Well, well!" he replied, much amused, "so that's the idea. Then why don't you say that? Always say what you mean, my daughter; it is much better."

The effect of that brief dialogue was devastating. I could not pray in the same old way. I began to question every sentence which I had previously taken for granted. I began to reason for myself and it was disturbing. But my father had taught me to think.

Father would sit for hours during the day and far into the night talking to anyone who wished to listen. These lengthy discussions took him away from his own work, which had been growing less since the Ingersoll episode and continued to shrink for the rest of his life. During those stormy years of religious controversy his attitude was always one of

tolerance. When we questioned him as to the church or Sunday school to which we should go, he suggested: "Try them all, but be chained to none." "Do your own thinking," he would repeat. I liked the idea of trying all the churches and Sunday schools, and for a year or two I made the rounds of the community, especially at Christmas and Easter.

I never liked to look at the picture of Jesus on the Cross. I could not see what good it did to keep looking at him. We could not help him, as he had been crucified long ago. What then was the use of people kneeling before the pictures to see his suffering? Thus I reasoned. To look at the statue of the Virgin Mary was more pleasant. I thought she was beautiful, smiling, colorful. It was the way I should like to look when I had a baby.

At this period we lived in a district outside the city where fortunately we had plenty of space for our playground. Slowly I began to reason about the difference in the lives of the children of the well-to-do and the children of the poor. The former were allowed to talk freely to their parents and to elders. They were free to romp and play wherever they chose, and seemed secure in their right to live and be just what they were. In conduct they were open and unafraid. They even smiled and talked to the policeman as they passed, and took possession of the best in life as a matter of course.

We, the children of poorer parents, knew not where we belonged. Everything that we desired most was forbidden. Our childhood was one of longing for things that were always denied. We were made to feel inferior to teachers, to elders, to all. We were burdens, and dependent on others for our existence. Every poor family was burdened with many children. Whatever we wanted most to do was sure to be wrong. Parents, teachers, ministers, policemen, all seemed to be watching to keep us from doing what we wanted to do most. Our home life nevertheless was colored by the mutual love of our parents and by intellectual, rational, tolerant discussions, religious and political.

II

Henry George's theories were creating a new sensation. Father became his champion and friend. He read aloud to us passages from "Progress and Poverty." He laughed and rejoiced when he came upon a meaty sentence. He shared these with mother, who accepted them as fine, because he said he thought they were fine. I can see him sitting at home in the morning, reading and laughing and joking. For him, paternal duties did not exist. Though never very strong, Mother was always busy sewing, cleaning, doing this and that for the ever increasing family. I wondered at her patience and her love for him!

He wore spotless white shirts and collars. His trousers were always creased, his shoes clean and polished. I never saw him do any of these things for himself, but he got them done somehow. With his own earnings curtailed, the older children of the family had to go to work to help meet the rent, buy winter coal and pay grocery bills. We were all healthy and strong, vigorous and active. Our appetites were curtailed only through necessity. Yet there was an atmosphere in the home which reflected the love of our parents for each other which in some way made up for the lack of material comforts in our lives.

I never knew Father and Mother to quarrel. I've known her to be temporarily irritated at his generosity—as when he was asked to bring home a dozen bananas for supper and bought a whole "bunch" of six dozen and gave them all away to the children at school as they were playing at recess; at his easy-going ways, his live-and-let-live attitude towards tramps. These and many other things must have tried her very soul; but not one of us dared to utter a word of criticism or condemnation about her adored and adoring husband.

The nearest approach to the end of her tested loyalty and patience was when Father invited Henry George to come to town to address a group at a banquet in the leading hotel. There was coal to buy and ever growing debts and household

FATHER TEACHING WORKMEN NEW METHODS OF STONECUTTING

MOTHER

AT FOURTEEN

bills. Mother was growing frailer year by year. As far back as I can remember, she was always pregnant or nursing a baby. She took the responsibilities of feeding and clothing the family as her own, and managed on the combined income of three or four older children to keep the wolf from the door.

On this occasion, when Father went into her realm and took those earnings for a banquet to entertain fifty men whose children were well-fed and clothed, her patience gave way. I do not know what happened between them, but I do know that he spent several days wooing back that smile and the light in those gray-green eyes. He succeeded, as usual, and all went well to the time of her death.

I can never look back on my childhood with joy. We often get together, my brothers and sisters and I, and laugh about things that happened then, but I never desire to live it over again. It was a hard childhood, which compelled one to face the realities of life before one's time. When a family is large the various members are affected according to their place in the family. As I was the sixth child, I saw the older and younger groups almost as one sees two generations.

The only memory I have of any sex awakening or a consciousness of sex was when I was ill with typhoid fever. I could not have been more than eight or nine years of age. I was taken ill at school, three miles away. The teacher noticed my many requests to leave the room and asked me if I wished to go home. I hated to go home; I dreaded that long walk back in the cold. Nevertheless, home I went, arriving in the early afternoon. I can see the little figure huddled before the kitchen stove, shaking and freezing. Mother was busy preparing supper, but called my attention to my legs, red from the heat of the fire, saying: "If you're that cold you had better go to bed."

I remember nothing beyond going upstairs to a cold room and a colder bed until weeks later I awakened in the night. The wind was howling and the house was shaking from the blasts. It was pitch dark. I felt about me and knew I was in bed, in a soft, warm, feather bed—it was mother's bed.

I felt of the wall and knew I was in her room. Then I heard heavy breathing beside me. It was Father. I was terrified. I wanted to scream out to Mother to beg her to come and take him away. I could not move, I dared not move, fearing he might awaken and move toward me. I lived through agonies of fear in a few minutes. Then Father's breathing changed—he was about to awaken. I was petrified; but he only turned over on his other side with his back toward me, taking all the bed clothing with him. I was cold; I began to shiver; blackness and lights flickered in my brain; then I felt I was falling, falling—and knew no more.

The story afterwards told me was that I had been very sick. Father's "good whisky" was vomited up, so a doctor was called in only to pronounce the ailment as typhoid fever. I was unconscious with a raging fever, and was carried downstairs to Mother's own room. She had been up with me night after night as I grew worse, and now the date of the crisis was at hand. She was worn out with her heavy tasks. Father ordered her to bed upstairs, while he was supposed to watch. The night was cold, and Father decided to lie down on the bed with his clothes on, ready for any emergency. He fell fast asleep and did not awaken until he heard my groans and found me uncovered, crouched close to the cold wall. He never knew that I had gained consciousness that night nor that he had put such terror into my heart.

III

Mother's eleven children were all ten-pounders and more when born. I used to hear her say with pride: "Not one of them born with a blotch, mark or blemish." We had heard about new-born babes in the neighborhood being "born sick." I had horrible visions of little bodies with sores covering their scrawny frames, and was convinced that this was possible when I saw a sickly baby in the arms of a terrified woman whose drunken husband had thrown the wailing, naked infant into the snow. The child evidently had eczema, and whined night

and day. The father was one of those ugly taciturn men who became frenzied at the realization of his wife's pregnancies. She had had ten children, five of them living, and this eleventh was too much for the father's nerves.

I remember having keen sympathy with that man! I could picture him returning home after a hard day's work to a household shrieking with the cries of that suffering baby. They were all baffled at any effort to cure it or to stop its noise. Desperate for want of sleep and quiet, his nerves overcame him, and out of the door into the snow the nuisance went!

While my first memory was one of adventurously wandering away from home and getting lost, my second had to do with the grown-up world of mystery.

Mother was ill. I was then the youngest child. The house was stilled; no one was allowed to talk above whispers. I tried to go into the bedroom where Mother lay, but was carried kicking and screeching back into another room. The other children were sent away from home, and I was sent to a neighbor's next door. It was Sunday morning and the woman who was nursing Mother had gone to early mass to request that prayers be said for the dying mother of six children. It was early and I wanted to see my mother. I knew enough not to try the door again. So, young as I was, I climbed on a box which I carried to the window in the yard, and peeked in under the shade which had been pulled down to within an inch of the bottom. I saw the figure of a woman on the bed, white and still, her braided hair falling across each shoulder. Beside the bed was a kneeling woman. The door opened, and Father entered. I knew then that Mother would not die.

Father had been out of town, and doubtless a miscarriage had taken place. But on Father's return he swept the mourning, praying women out of the house, and from that time on he was the only doctor the family ever had. It was he who brought the babies into the world. He nursed Mother through six weeks of pneumonia; he set and straightened a younger

brother's broken leg; he carried me through a serious case of typhoid fever, ivy poisoning, and all the ailments of childhood.

His cure-all was whisky—"good whisky." When a case of mumps turned into a large ugly abscess, he sterilized the blade of his jack-knife over a flame, lanced the abscess and cleaned the wound with whisky, "good whisky." When my face was swollen with erysipelas, he was advised to paint it three times each day with tincture of iodine. I was held firmly in place while this torture was inflicted, and then I jumped and ran, screaming and howling with pain, into the cellar, where I plunged my burning face into a pan of cool buttermilk until the pain subsided. This went on for several days and I was growing thin and exhausted from the dreaded iodine. Finally Father decided to abandon the treatment for "good whisky," and I recovered.

In our large family, the arrival of another baby was taken for granted. Just as a new litter of puppies excited no unusual curiosity, so the cry of a new baby never seemed unexpected.

The first time I saw a new-born baby brother, I helped the nurse to weigh him. He weighed fourteen and a half pounds. The date of his birth, the hour and the weight went down in the family record in the Bible. I remember how amazed I was that he was so big. I helped to clear away the things, and felt more grown-up than ever before. The nurse took me into her confidence by telling me that Mother had had a "terrible hard time." Father was the doctor, as usual, and after a few weeks Mother was on her feet going about, frail though smiling, showing off the bouncing red-haired boy as the prize of all perfect babies.

Sex knowledge was a natural part of life. I had always known where babies came from. My mother never discussed sex with us. It was a curious twist of father's make-up that, advanced as he was in his attitude toward economic and social questions, free trade and woman suffrage, he never knew a

thing about contraception until some years after Mother's death.

My father was fond of dogs, as were my brothers. All were good shots, and hunting was part of our childhood life. My brothers had several dogs for fox and rabbit hunting. Father preferred bird dogs—English or Irish setters.

I remember one incident which occurred when I was about ten years old or even younger. I was playing on a nearby hillside, crowning myself with a wreath of leaves pinned together with thorns. While I was at play, a large white dog came up, sniffed at me, wagged his tail and seemed to want to belong. I knew enough about dogs to see that this was not a common ordinary dog, and I knew it was an English setter. My heart leaped with joy at the thought of taking that lovely dog home to Father. The dog had no collar; he had evidently been lost; so why could he not belong to me? He had one brown-red spot on the back of his neck, and that gave me an idea. I took him to the barn, tied him to a hook, and painted several large brown-red spots over his body. I fed him food that belonged to the other dogs for a day, and then led him forth to my father as a special present from me.

Father examined the dog carefully, put him through several tests, looked slyly at me out of the corner of his eyes, and to this day the look of admiration he threw me remains in my memory. Father went to the editor of the daily newspaper and reported his find, but no one ever claimed the dog. We called him Toss. He lived with us twelve years. The spots soon wore off, and he grew whiter as he grew older.

IV

There were times in my life, however, when an inner resolve or determination came counter to the other forces in me which, as I look back upon the years, I recognize could have easily wrecked and changed the whole course of my life. I wonder if I can remember these clearly enough to tell about them.

The first was when I was a very young girl, not more than eight years of age. Everyone in town was talking about the coming of a play, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." There were to be two or three performances, one on Saturday afternoon. Every girl I knew or played with was going to that matinee on Saturday. It never occurred to me to ask my parents for such a luxury as money for a matinee. While ten cents was the price of admission, still ten cents could help buy bare necessities of which we were in need. Oh, how I longed to work, to earn my own money, to do something so that I could have a little money of my very own!

Saturday afternoon came. I said nothing, but kept my own counsel. I never said I could not go to the matinee. *I knew I would go!* My playmate and neighbor, a girl of my own age, called for me, and together we started off to the matinee, she with her ten cents, I with my Faith.

We arrived at the theater half an hour before the doors opened. We were packed close to the entrance. Hundreds of boys and girls, men and women crowded into the small space. I began to feel desperate; I had no ticket; I had no money. Near me I saw a woman open her purse and count her change. My head reeled. The idea came surging through me that here was the chance to seize that purse, take ten cents and get into that matinee! The purse was so near that it touched my arm. Suddenly the doors opened, the crowd pushed and shoved, and I was thrown headlong under the ropes and into the theater before I knew where I was. God be praised! No one bothered further about me. I took the first seat I could find. The girl I was with never knew I had neither ticket nor money; her ticket was taken up at the entrance while I miraculously escaped the rough hand of the doorkeeper.

But that night I lay awake trembling at the remembrance of the power which had seized me, the escape and the victory. I began to think of the stories of the devil and his temptations. I am sure I leaned towards prayer those days, especially

prayers of thanks. But also I remembered I had had no joy in the play—I had scarcely seen or heard the actors. My friend thrilled to the story of Uncle Tom and Little Eva, but my thoughts were full of my own escape and the possible punishment had I not been saved by the hand of God.

When I look back on that day, I shudder to think what that escapade might have cost me. Thousands of other children were in reformatories and jails for no greater crime. I began to fear that power within myself which determined actions beyond my control. It seemed at times as if there were two "mes," usually together, but at times pulling apart. I often talked to that other "me" and found her full of romance and daring. She urged me on to venture and action. She was intrepid, resourceful and very daring. Sometimes she went too fast for the other me, as at the theatre. I realized there was danger in her leadership. Later I began to consider "team work," and put myself through strenuous ordeals in order to strengthen the head "me."

I began to make myself do the things I dreaded most to do—to go upstairs alone to bed without a light, to go down into the cellar without singing, to get up on the rafters in the barn and jump down on the hay stack thirty or forty feet below. When I had conquered all these dreaded feats, I felt more secure and stronger within myself. There was, however, one thing I dreaded more than anything in life. It was to walk on the ties of the railroad bridge which spanned the Chemung River. Two or three years before I had been taken across this iron structure by my father and brother who often went there to fish in the river below. I had been held by both hands as I made those steps and looked down from the dizzy heights into the water. There was not only the danger of falling through the space between the ties, but the danger of meeting a train on the bridge which was so narrow that there was room only for the up and down trains to pass. We had friends across the river on a large luxurious farm, but to get there we usually walked three miles in a

roundabout way across another wooden bridge for traffic and pedestrians. I could not recall the experience of that perilous walk with my father and brother without feeling dizzy or faint.

Now, however, as I began to strengthen my weaker "me," I decided that this walk must be taken—and alone. We were forbidden ever to go near that part of the town without an older member of the family. Nevertheless I felt I must walk across that bridge. I trembled with fear as I got near the place, but the more afraid I felt the more determined I was to make myself do it. There was no turning back once I started across. I did not know the schedule of the trains, but I did remember which was the side for the up trains and which for the down trains. I can recall now how stolidly I put that left foot on the first tie; and with head up I started the venturesome walk which would make me faint if I tried it today. I dared not look down at the water; I wanted terribly to see that my foot was placed firmly on the tie, but could not trust my head, so I kept on.

When about a quarter of the way across, I heard the singing of the steel rails! I knew a train was speeding towards me! I could not see it because a curve in the road was just beyond the end of the bridge. The singing grew stronger, and I crossed on one tie to the iron bars, deciding to hold fast there until the train went past, but suddenly around the curve the huge engine emerged, snorting, whistling like a cruel angry monster. It came so quickly that I tried to hide behind the iron girder to protect myself from the force of its speed, when my foot slipped and I fell through the space, saved only by the fact that both arms had not been able to pass through; and there I was, left dangling on that bridge while the five-car passenger train of the Erie went rushing past. All I thought of at the time was the hope that the engineer would not emit the sizzling steam as I had seen it done time after time when the trains whizzed past us at the station. I bowed my head, shut my eyes, and prayed to the engineer

not to emit the steam. I was thankful when the train passed, but realized I was helpless to get up, as there was nothing to support the feet. There I hung, I do not know how long, until my terror subsided at the sight of a man, a friend of my father's, who was fishing on the bridge and who came to my rescue and pulled the fat, aching little body out of the hole. He gave me a scolding and asked if my father knew I was over there. He tried to set me toward home, advising me to go straight back.

I knew I never could go back home defeated. It was just as impossible to go back instead of forward as it was to stop breathing. Terrified though I was, and bruised and bleeding as well, the remainder of that journey across the bridge was somehow easier than the first part. When I stepped off the bridge I ran happily to the farm to see our friends, and yet refrained from telling them of the journey lest I get another scolding.

After this, I felt almost grown up. I did not talk about it, but something inside me had conquered something else.

I am certain my childhood days were filled with many other episodes, if not quite so dangerous at least as eventful. My father must have realized a certain quality in me for he often shared and disclosed unusual ideas for my youthful mind to conjure with.

For instance, when a younger brother, aged four, died, who had been named Henry George McGlyn after two of father's admiring friends, my mother's grief was inconsolable. It was the first death in the family, the only child she had lost of her ten living children. She was disconsolate. Father, who loved Mother dearly, was in despair to assuage her grief. He had worked all night over the child, steaming the room and bed, and finally had sent for the doctor. But the doctor arrived only to pronounce the child dead, a victim of pneumonia.

Mother's sorrow touched my father very deeply. Perhaps he felt himself to be somewhat to blame. Mother complained

that she had no picture of the lovely boy. She spoke of the fine shape of his head, the wide, well-set eyes, the firmness of mouth and chin, the classic contour of face, all of which would soon be wiped forever from her sight and perhaps her memory as well.

Ever ingenious and resourceful, Father comforted her by the promise of a surprise. The day after the burial he was constantly occupied in his studio. When darkness fell and the children were sent off to bed, he took me affectionately by the hand and said he wanted me to stay up and help him on a piece of work he was about to do. I gladly agreed, not knowing what he could be doing at that time of night. About eleven o'clock we went forth into a pitch-black darkness with a wheelbarrow full of tools and a bag of plaster of Paris. We walked on and on for fully two miles to the cemetery where the little brother had been buried. I was set to watch the gateway while Father dug with pick and shovel until the coffin was found. It was then brought up, opened, and a cast made of the boy's head and shoulders!

I sat in that graveyard gateway shivering with cold and excitement. No one had told me what was being done. Father had not explained. He just took it for granted that I understood. I was told to run back to him and swing the lantern if I heard anyone coming. The lighted lantern was hidden in the nearby bushes over a grave. I never doubted my father's actions. Whatever he was doing in secret was right and doubtless noble. If there was a law against a man's digging up his own dead child, then the law was wrong and that was all there was to that.

We walked back those long weary miles, arriving home in the early hours of the morning. Nothing was said to Mother or to the others about that amazing night's work. I was not told to keep silent, but I knew there was mystery in the air and it was no time to talk. For two nights I worked with Father while he modelled that head. I remember the queer feeling I had when I discovered some of the hair which had stuck in the plaster. On the third day, just after supper, the

children were told they could come into the studio, and there we witnessed the uncovering and presentation of the plaster bust, a perfect likeness of the child, to my sobbing and grateful mother.

V

During the early years of my childhood we lived on the outskirts of the city. Mother's health was not good, and, hearing that pure air was good for "lung trouble," we had built a house among the pines.

Now at last we were to move away from the pine woods on the outskirts of the city. We were growing up. Mother's health was not getting better in the pine woods. The house we had built for six little children was far too small for older ones.

We were to move up on the hills, not in the same district with the pretty mothers and few children, but on the Western hills where there were likewise open spaces, neighbors; and we were to have a larger house. We moved. A new life began for us all. I had the first girl friend I had known intimately, and we confided together our innermost secrets. She was reticent, proud and Irish; I always marvelled at her poise. She read books and the fashion magazines, manicured her nails regularly, discounted romance, laughed and poked fun at the priests in their gowns, but went regularly to mass every Sunday. Together we attended the public school. Her home study was a serious matter. When that was necessary, no other work was required of her. In our house home study was impossible. There were always children to be put to bed, to be rocked to sleep; feet, knees and hands to be washed. Then the older members of the family used the warm living room to discuss their doings. How could lessons be learned in such an atmosphere? It was impossible. I kept up in my studies, but it was simply because I liked them and learned my lessons easily.

So I grew from childhood into girlhood—a strange, hard, barren life, materially speaking, but rich, colorful and abun-

dant in things of the spirit. Ideas and opinions far beyond my mental concept clung to me. I realized the force of opposition. I intuitively knew that a price must be paid for honest thinking.

I had been promoted to the highest grade in the grammar school. The teacher was one of those self-important persons who liked to get the laugh on others to keep it off herself.

Someone had given me a new pair of gloves—nice, soft ones, the first new pair I had ever worn. They were hard to pull over the fingers, and yet I wanted to wear them. I tarried outside and pulled and stretched them over the hands. I walked into the school room about three minutes late. The teacher glanced up and saw me walking leisurely into the classroom. She made me the target for attention.

"Oho," she called me by name, "so it's you! Have you deigned to come to school this afternoon? I wonder at it. Ah, new gloves!"

She went on and on until I reached my seat and removed my gloves and sat waiting for her to stop. She started off again, but before she got the next sentence out of her mouth I was off my seat and out of the door. I had packed my books in a determination to leave school forever. I walked straight home to Mother and announced that I was through with school, I'd never go back again. Here was a fixed determination, like the determination to attend the matinee several years before. I knew that nothing on earth or in heaven could change me. I'd go to jail, I'd go to work, I'd starve and die; but back to that school and teacher I would never go. It was so settled in my mind that I would not discuss the subject with any one—the cause of it all seemed too silly.

The family became alarmed. Mother was glad enough to have me at home for a while to help her with the thousand household cares. I was capable, quiet, thorough and strong. I could get through a surprising amount of work in no time. A family council was called. I was questioned as to my future. Did I think I knew enough to do anything in life?

Did I think I had an education? Could any one get anywhere without one? Was I prepared to earn my living? How? When? Questions were hurled at me. Taunts and insinuations and threats of factory-life were in the air. I did not care. I would not go back to that school. I had only a few months to finish, and then would be ready for high school. It made no difference if it had been but an hour—I would never go back.

VI

The outcome of it was the decision that I was to be sent away to boarding school at Claverack, New York. It took the place of high school and preparatory school. There one could prepare for Cornell College. Great rejoicing! A new world to discover! Claverack College and Hudson River Institute was one of the oldest co-educational schools in the country. It nestled in the Catskill Mountains, about three miles from the City of Hudson.

The principal of the school was Professor Arthur H. Flack, a man whose influence has spread over countless young lives. He made it possible for me to attend school by allowing me to work part time for my board. The family jointly paid the tuition, and my oldest sisters, Mary and Nan, gave me the necessary clothes and books and other requirements.

It was all so new and strange. The girls I met did not come up to the vision I had in my imagination. They seemed plain, uninteresting, regular, without flair, initiative or imagination. I was lonely and homesick, but I never wanted to return home. Within a few months I was in the thickest of school activities —dances, escapades, teas, long walks in forbidden lanes.

I spent three years at Claverack, three full and happy years. I was interested in social questions, I was ardent for suffrage, for woman's emancipation. A paper I wrote on "Women's Rights" was to be read in Chapel one Saturday morning. News of it spread about. Boys shouted at me in class, drew pictures of women smoking huge cigars, wearing trousers and men's

clothing. I studied and wrote as I never had before. I sent long letters to Father getting facts on woman suffrage, facts on woman's history. Oh, what letters in reply! All about Helen of Troy, the battle of Nebuchadnezzar, Ruth, Cleopatra, Poppaea, famous queens, women authors, poets and mothers. It was a great essay! I stole away to the cemetery and stood on the monuments over the graves and said every word aloud. Again and again, each day I read and reread that speech in the quiet of the dead.

After suffrage, I took up the silver question of William Jennings Bryan. No one else seemed to know anything about it. They were all for gold, so I took the other side and studied and worked on a debate. I gradually became known as having advanced ideas; only "grinds," or serious boys paid attention to me, but the girls came to me with all their sorrows and woes and love affairs. In recitation and acting I excelled. My teacher said I'd make a good actress, and that was all I needed to set acting as my goal.

I went home on vacation and intimated I was going on the stage. Shock and disapproval were evident. Father pooh-poohed the idea; but my sister Mary, the most saintlike woman who walked the earth, agreed with me as to my ability and said I should go to the dramatic school in New York as soon as I finished Claverack; she would apply at once to Charles Frohman and I should try as an understudy to Maude Adams. Great hopes! Splendid aspirations! A wise sister!

Money was saved, application made, pictures taken in various poses with and without hats. A return letter from the school management came, enclosing a form to be filled in with name, address, age, height, color of hair, eyes, and skin. All went well; but I was asked to give the size of the legs, both right and left leg, not only the length but also the size of ankle, knee, calf and thigh!

I was left cold. Enthusiasm for the stage vanished. It was not that I did not know the size of my own legs. I did. Those were the days when cigarette pictures of actresses, plump and well-formed, came in every "pack." We in the gymnasium

compared our legs and criticized our shapes and those of others. That was mutual and friendly and intimate. But to see that personal and intimate information go coldly down on paper and be sent off to strange men, to have your legs, ankles and hips valued as something apart from the owner of them was like cutting yourself in parts. I could not see what legs had to do with being a great actress. I had expected to have to account for the quality of my voice, for my ability to sing, to play, for grace, agility, character, morals, and for my experience in and ability to love. None of these qualities seemed important to managers who were to train one to become a second Maude Adams. I did not fill in the printed form, nor send the photographs. I just put them all away and turned my desires to more serious studies where brains, not legs, were to count.

Those years at school were full of interest and adolescent loves. Adolescent boys and girls (about 500) lived and studied together under one roof. The girls' rooms were separated from the boys' by the apartment which the principal and teachers occupied. We all shared the same dining room, and at each table sat both sexes in about equal number with two teachers besides, one at each end.

I look back on those years of adolescence with great interest. I think my experience was not very different from that of others at the same age.

I fell deeply and strangely in love with Esther, a girl whose beauty, form and loveliness was to be compared only to the statue of Venus. I had been at school only a few weeks and was just getting over a spell of homesickness. I started down the hall early one morning, and beheld the loveliest creature I ever saw in my life. She was getting water in a coffee pot. Her hair had fallen over her shoulders; she was slender as a lily, and seemed so unreal that I fled past her in fright. But I could not go far away. I heard her steps down the corridor and saw her enter a room by the stairs. That was enough. I know where she "roomed," and I should find out who she was.

Esther held me fascinated for the entire year. I have never been so moved by beauty as I was by hers. Her body, her walk, the shape and set of her head, the movement of her lips; all, everything she said and did held me spellbound. I cried at night because I felt her loveliness to be something I could not reach. I felt separated from her, though we were constantly together. She was the virginal, chaste type of woman, though she was but a girl at the time. That she was a year older than I, may have accounted for the awe I felt towards her; but it was more than that. She and all that she was represented an entirely new world to me. She was the queen of this new world, the heroine of every book I had read come to life.

Her clothes fascinated me. Only once before had I seen such lovely clothes: I had seen two women on the street at home who wore bright, pretty dresses and carried colorful parasols. I stood admiring them as they passed by. I was yanked by the arm and pulled into a near-by store and told not to look at those women as they were "bad." Men laughed and nudged each other as they passed. I was told by one of the girls at home that they were "bad because they let men kiss them for money." The association of color, brightness, decoration on women's attire reminded me of those "bad women." Esther's dresses were the envy of every girl at school. She came from New York City, and had all the advantages of the newest models in fashion and taste of the metropolis.

Since my youthful "crush" on lovely Esther I have understood and sympathized with the youth who worships at the feet of his first love. I can understand what he feels in his adoration of this mysterious creature called "girl." Esther and I were miles apart in everything—tradition, training, experience, looks, behavior—in everything but romance. There we touched hands and thereby bridged our lives. We understood each other, and finally grew to be life long friends.

While my love for Esther was the dominating thrill of my adolescent life, I nevertheless was unhappy in that love. It kept me from caring particularly for any one else. I did not

understand its depth nor its influence over me, but there it towered in its cruel majesty until Amelia came. I have often heard it said that a fifty-fifty love is ideal. I doubt that now. I think it would become a platonic relationship and not love at all. Most happy loves are those capable of a different degree of intensity of love from the beloved. One must give and the other be able to receive.

Esther was beautiful but Amelia was attractive. She was shorter and younger than I but she had a mind and brain that could act, and her wit and keen sense of appreciation fired my Irish imagination. We were close pals, and had more in common than had Esther and I. Amelia's love for me strengthened and developed my individuality. Her loyalty and praise and admiration fed all the hungry spaces in my being. For two years we were inseparable. While we had rooms apart, we never kept to them. Amelia was an only child. She came of parents who boasted of kinship with that famous Puritan, Jonathan Edwards. She was a Methodist. The school at Claverack was a Methodist school, and Sundays were given over to the reading of the Bible.

Amelia got permission to study with me in my room. Each Sunday afternoon we occupied ourselves dutifully. I mended and darned my clothing while Amelia riddled the passages of the Bible with ridiculous epithets and exaggerations. She could advance witty and brilliant comments which would have made Bob Ingersoll rejoice, yet in all seriousness she attended services and sang psalms regularly and devotedly.

Some of the older girls carried on a whispering campaign about the affection and devotion Amelia showered on me. It did not worry us. We continued our friendship through the years. I gave my first son her family name.

There were other loves, "crushes," affairs of the heart between boys and girls. I often laugh as I read the advice given by some authors on sex psychology and hygiene, especially when it refers to sex intimacies between girls in adolescence. In my humble opinion there are few, very few men besides Havelock Ellis who have the faintest idea, or could ever grasp

the real feeling which exists among adolescent girls. The depth of its chastity, the simplicity of its fulfillment are part of the girl's growth. Seldom does physical sex expression enter into the relation; very, very seldom indeed. I have lived with girls for years, in all conditions and with all types, and only after I was well along in maturity did I come into contact with homosexual problems. Girls need each other's affection and love during adolescence as much as they need sunshine and air. Some reticent or demonstrative girls can express their emotions more freely and naturally with each other than they can with elders or with the opposite sex.

Many of the girls were engaged to the "best beau" on leaving school each year. Engagements were secret and whispered among us. The boy who had danced attendance on me was popular because he was fine, clean and honest. Though not officially engaged, we had a mutual understanding that we would be married.

VII

The following year I was summoned home by Father to attend Mother who had been growing thinner and frailer since the last baby was born. I then began to delve into books about nursing to gain information on the care of the sick.

Mother had grown very pale since I had last seen her. Her slender body shook with a racking cough leaving her weak and limp as a rag. Father carried her from room to room and devoted himself to her every wish and comfort. But her days were not long. It was a folk superstition that if a "consumptive" lived through the month of March he would live until November. She died on the thirty-first of March, leaving Father desolate and inconsolable.

While Mother was alive Father gave little concern to the conduct of his children. He depended on her to understand and guide their morals. Now, however, he became frantic with anxiety and worry, mainly concerning his two young daughters, Ethel and Margaret. His whole attitude toward

life seemed suddenly to have changed. He was lonely for Mother, lonely for her love, and doubtless missed her ready appreciation of his own longings and misgivings. But to me he had become a tyrant and an unappreciative parent who had given us the world in which to roam and now suddenly wanted to put us behind prison bars.

We were not allowed to leave the house without his permission. We had to ask him if Tom, or Jack, or Bill—our "boy friends"—could spend the evening with us on the verandah. Often he said "No" without reason or explanation, and that was an end to it. After six months of this "dog in the manger" existence I got weary of his nagging and went with Sister and a friend to an open-air concert. We knew that ten o'clock was the limit of open doors, and on the stroke of ten we were running with all our might towards home; but alas! we were a full block away.

When we arrived before the house, three minutes late, it was in utter darkness. The doors were closed; not a sight nor sound of a living creature anywhere. We banged and knocked upon the doors, first this one, then that. Finally a door was opened part way, Father looked out at us, reached out a hand and caught my sister's arm saying: "You are not to blame for this outrageous behavior. Come in." With that he pulled her into the house and shut the door.

I was left on the verandah in the dark. It was a chilly night in October. I was stunned by such a surprise. I did not know this monster father. I was less than sixteen years old, and was left out in the streets at night for being three minutes late!

Where was I to go? What *could* I do? I had no relatives, no cousins to whom I could go, and both of my elder sisters were out of the city. I was hurt beyond words at this treatment, but I knew that Father would not sleep a wink and would be frantic with worry in an hour's time. My first thought was to sit on the verandah steps and patiently wait for him to come out, which he was certain to do. Then it

began to get cold; I had no wrap and I knew it was dangerous to keep inactive, so I decided to take a walk and *think*.

In those days it was not the custom for "decent" girls to roam the streets alone at night. In fact, to be seen alone after ten o'clock was almost an invitation for illicit solicitation. I knew this, but I was not afraid. I had always had faith in men's goodness, especially if they were sober. I walked and walked away from the house, wondering where I should go and what I should do. It was not only the question of this night, but of the morrow and the future. I thought of the younger children left motherless at home and unhappy with this new kind of father. I felt something should be done to protect them against him. I decided finally what to do. I went to the home of the friend who had been with me at the concert. She had not yet gone to bed, and her mother received me so hospitably that I shall bless her forevermore.

The next day I borrowed money from her mother and went to visit a friend in Elmira. In the meantime, Father, being alarmed to find me really gone when he came down to let me in, had dressed and gone out to search for me. He walked up and down the main street looking everywhere and asking everyone he knew if I had been seen.

He returned in the early hours of the morning to find me still absent. Then he sent word to my sister, who came and called a family council. I too had written her. I could not endure the thought of her possible anxiety over my disappearance.

After a few weeks' visit I was urged to return home, and Father and I had a long talk together. He told me frankly that he was worried over the number of "beaux" I was having, especially over one who he declared "looked like a scoundrel." Father was sure "that fellow means no good by you." The idea of sending letters *every* day and sometimes telegrams as well was not Father's way of wooing. It was too flattering, too sweeping. What could any one have to say in a letter *every* day? To his way of thinking, a decent man comes to the house and does his talking straight; he sits round with the

family and gets acquainted. Poor Dad! There was no use to explain nor to argue. Silence was the best weapon. I used it.

The adolescent egg was hatching. I was no longer content to hear arguments on religion or politics. I wanted a world of action. I longed for romance, dancing, wooing, experience. I felt I was strong enough to test all temptations. I could endure all hardships—anything but to remain at home. The boys, now men, who called to see me all seemed so dull, so provincial. Their conversation was flat, small talk, gossip—smart, silly replies, foolish questions. The thought of marriage was akin to suicide.

Mentally I had developed beyond my age. I knew more of current history and current topics, of up-to-date politics, of the latest books, plays, actresses and actors, and people of note than did any of my associates.

None of these could I discuss with Father. He had never encouraged our reading fiction—"love stories." "All nonsense," he said. "Read to cultivate and uplift your mind. Read what will benefit you in the battle of life."

We borrowed books from the Free Library (the library he had championed and helped to establish fifteen years earlier), and read them in bed at night, hiding them under the mattress during the day. Books like "Graustark," "Prisoners of Hope," "The Prisoner of Zenda," "The Three Musketeers" and all the favorites were forbidden fruit.

One day I was waiting for the children to come in for lunch and was deeply buried in "David Harum." I did not hear Father enter the room. I was convulsed with mirth, and gave out shouts of ill-suppressed laughter. Dad stood in the doorway looking like an Irish policeman. I was the culprit caught in the trap. I looked up at him; and suddenly the old love, the old feeling I had had for him flamed up anew. I laughed and laughed. I was not afraid; I did not care for his frowns nor his old silly notions. I just knew that in his heart he was trying to guide his children and he was not using his own head nor heart as the guide. My laughter broke the spell; it

was contagious. It was the first of its kind in that dreary, august household since Mother's death. I stood up and said: "Oh Dad, *do* listen to this!" and I read a passage from old Dave's philosophy. That was enough. The book could not be found for over a week, and Dad was seen off in his own room shaking with laughter over its pages. I noticed after that he began to look about for books with interest as if seeking for more of "that nonsense."

Since Mother's death I had managed the finances and ordered the meals and paid the debts on our all too meagre income. There was nothing left for my clothing nor for any outside diversions. All that could be squeezed out by making this or that do had to go for shoes or necessities for the younger brothers. Mend, patch, sew as one would, there was a limit to the endurance of trousers, and new ones had to be purchased.

It was now six months after Mother's death. I had given up encouraging boys to see me. I had refused to marry the dullards of the town. I preferred to live in action. I began to study medical books borrowed from the library and from one of the general practitioners who was a liberal and a friend of the family. He was much amused at the interest displayed in so young a girl, and suggested I'd probably "get over it."

An invitation to visit Esther in New York City came in the spring. After a brief visit with the friend of my school days I decided to look about for some kind of work leading ultimately to medical school. Cornell College still called to me, but I could not bridge the gap between my life and the long journey fitting one for the medical profession.

Finally, through a friend of Esther's mother, I was accepted as a probationer in a small new hospital in Westchester County not far from New York City. My delight knew no bounds.

I was happy in the work, in the knowledge I was gaining, happy in the possibilities of the future, happy in the trust patients and doctors had in me. The work was trying because of the long hours. But those years of training now seem a period which tested character, integrity, nerve, patience and

endurance. That training, severe as only it can be in a small hospital where the equipment is less modern than in the larger city hospitals, nevertheless equipped me to organize myself for the battle of life, and later became the background which gave support to the ordeals of motherhood. It influenced tremendously the direction the birth control movement was to take and is taking.

II

MARRIAGE AND MOTHERHOOD

IN EVERYONE'S life there are certain years, which, looked at in retrospect, seem unrelated and unimportant. As incidents and events recede in memory, details fade out and only towering impressions remain. Yet when memories and recollections are stirred by old letters, diaries, photographs or even snapshots, by those bits of jewelry or objects that we carry through life for no particular reason except that they symbolize certain lost periods and often possess the strange power of evoking pangs of regret—when, I say, we begin to relive those lost years, how full of significance they do actually become!

This at any rate is most certainly true of the years after I had left my nursing vocation to be precipitated swiftly into romance and marriage. I must confess right here that fundamentally I have never been able to separate romance from marriage. Some of the bored, sophisticated youths of this generation have often accused me of being "incurably romantic." To me marriage and motherhood were at that

period, and still are, organically bound up with love and romance.

William Sanger was an architect by profession, an artist by temperament. To me it seemed that he possessed the qualities of native genius, as well as its limitations and its liabilities.

One evening at the hospital in New York where I was taking a post-graduate course an informal dance was held, attended by the nurses, internes, and some of the younger doctors. I had been dancing with one of the latter, and stood chatting with him when he was told that a caller was waiting for him in the reception room. It was his architect with the blue prints for the home the young physician was about to build in Westchester County.

He asked me to come with him to look at the plans. They were presented by a dark young man with intense, fiery eyes —eyes, I discovered, that did not leave me, since every time I looked up from the blueprints I found that the artist was looking at me instead of explaining details to his client.

I gave the incident little thought after he left. The next morning at seven-thirty o'clock, however, as I left the hospital for my brief early daily constitutional, I was surprised to find the architect at the foot of the hospital steps. He asked if he could accompany me on my walk. I never knew whether it was an accident or whether he had been waiting for me. But after that day William Sanger was waiting for me each morning. He was impatient of conventionalities, intense in his new love, his whole mind concentrated on our future life together.

Within six months we were married, joyously planning our future. Although he was an architect, he yearned for more personal creative expression. As soon as money enough was saved, we were to go to Paris where he was to continue his studies.

It was less than a year, however, before we were rudely shaken out of this world of rosy dreams we so innocently inhabited. That was when our doctor bluntly informed us

that my health was in jeopardy, that long hours of work had made inroads upon a frail constitution and had overtaxed vital energies. I was ordered to a climate of high altitude. I guessed the worst, and the doctor confirmed my suspicion: I was a victim of incipient tuberculosis, which it was necessary to check at once before it could spread to vital organs.

Off I was sent to the Adirondacks to regain my health, to build up new strength and to safeguard the new life which even then was on its way to be born.

A few weeks before the expected arrival of my first-born I returned to New York to await the great event. The physicians pronounced the child perfectly healthy, strong and sturdy. I looked upon this as a victory. As soon as I was out of the physician's care, however, it was deemed advisable for me to return to the Adirondacks. The baby was put in the care of a competent nurse and the three of us went back to the mountains. Our meager savings were depleted, but the artist husband insisted that my recovery was of first and paramount importance.

In these days of advanced psychology great significance is attached to the relations of father and daughter. For years I had looked upon the influence of my father as a decisive factor in my work for birth control. Now I am not so certain that it was solely the cause. The birth of my first son may have, and doubtless did have a tremendous bearing on my activities. In the month of February 1930 I was in California, organizing the Western states for federal legislation. I was calling a conference to discuss the form of bill to present to Congress for enactment. I had sent invitations to physicians in all the Western states asking their endorsement of this work. Among the replies I had a brief personal note from a doctor whose name I failed to recognize. "Dear Mrs. Sanger," I read, "Some day I want to hear from your own lips just what part my ignorance of obstetrics has played in the work which you have made so definitely your own. It was a hard night

for us both. I'm with you heart and soul in the work you are doing. Sorry I can't attend the Conference."

At first as I read that note I could make nothing of its meaning. The name was not familiar to me, and I was about to put it aside for further consideration when the words "It was a hard night for us both" seemed suddenly to open vistas of my memory. Then I recognized the name of the doctor as the same who had attended me at the birth of my first child twenty-five years before. He was then a young general practitioner living in New York City, and was called in as a substitute for the obstetrician we had engaged.

Something in that note affected me like a shot. A flood of feeling engulfed me, and I had to leave my work and go home. All that night I suffered with pains in the back and had all the symptoms of labor pains! And this twenty-five years after my son was born! It was extraordinary. I am not a hysterical person, yet it was all I could do to pull myself together for the next two days. The memory of that agonizing birth kept me in mental torture, and I felt again the physical pangs of those lingering hours on November 18th, 1905. Even now, as I write these words, I can feel slight spasmodic pains across the abdomen and back; and I believe were I to dwell upon the memory of that event even to describe it, I should be physically ill.

Here then is a factor which must be reckoned with.

Certain I am, at any rate, that the ordeal of the birth had overtaxed my limited vitality, even with the utmost care preceding and following birth. Gradually, inevitably, my condition went from bad to worse. At the end of eight or nine months it was necessary to call in specialists. In fact, it was Dr. Trudeau himself who advised that I must be separated from all personal responsibilities—family, baby, husband; that I should live in Saranac under his daily supervision. My sister and my husband's mother had come to arrange for this change and the future care of the baby. After the consultation it gradually dawned upon me that preparations were really being made for a long lingering illness, and eventually death.

I went to bed. I could not sleep. I turned the problem over and over in my sleepless mind. "I won't die! I won't!" I kept repeating to myself. Finally the first glimmer of dawn appeared through the curtains. I got up, looked at the steadily ticking clock. It was not yet five o'clock. I dressed quickly for a long journey. Then I crept stealthily out into the hall. I went into the bedroom where the nurse and the baby were sleeping soundly. I told her to get ready for a long ride to the railroad station, that we were going back to New York.

She looked up in sleepy dismay. Something in the resolute and determined expression in my face prevented her from voicing opposition to this order although she had been recently told that on no account was I to be worried or troubled over the care of the baby. Now she found me taking charge of him again and she had nothing to do but obey.

We took the long ride in a horse-drawn vehicle to the station toward Saratoga, and then found ourselves comfortably seated in an express for New York. I was determined that I should act; that to remain in an atmosphere of invalidism, stuffing myself with quarts of milk and dozens of eggs each day and swallowing huge capsules of creosote would be slowly but surely to dig my own grave. I decided to give old Death a run, and if he was to outdistance me I'd call it square, but at least I'd die in an atmosphere of love.

We arrived at the Grand Central Station and were met by a much surprised and confused husband, with two telegrams in his hands wondering which information to follow. A night letter sent from my sister stated I was to be removed to Saranac at once, and he was to forward his agreement and consent as to the care of the baby by other relatives. The second telegram, sent by me from Saratoga, said I was arriving at noon and he was to meet me and arrange living accommodations in the suburbs of New York City.

When we met and he understood my motive in leaving, instead of scolding and arguing as I expected, he rejoiced my

heart by exclaiming: "That's just right—get away from that d--d atmosphere! You won't die—I won't let you die!"

We started at once to look about in Westchester County for a possible home. For three weeks I refused to eat any food whatever and drank only water. Finally, at the end of that time, I began to take an interest in food; and gradually I became well enough to renew my activities. But the next six years were given over to constant consideration of recovery. It was six years of combat—unending, discouraging, impossible except for the indomitable optimism of youth. Although my first son was born strong and well, my own condition had to be constantly guarded and attended.

In looking about the suburbs for a suitable location in which to build and to bring up our family, we decided that we needed something more than a mere house. We wanted space. We wanted a house with a view. We wanted a garden. At Hastings-on-Hudson we came across a new development consisting of about fifty acres of hillside land overlooking the river. This land had been purchased by a group of professional people with the idea of developing a colony of homes for men and women of congenial tastes, and to insure proper environment for their children. We were delighted with its possibilities. We bought an acre of this land with high hopes. We were going to have our own home at last! We were going to settle down for life. We were delighted with our neighbors. We planned a large family; a comfortable, serene, suburban existence.

We rented a little house near-by so that we could supervise the construction of our home, the landscaping of our garden. Every architect, every artist longs for that happy day when he can see his cherished dreams become a reality. Every detail of the structure of that house was watched. There was to be a large library with a great fireplace; a spacious Colonial dining room; a large nursery opening on to a verandah overlooking the Hudson; a studio for drawing and painting. We spent our evenings planning this house of our dreams, careful to avoid mistakes.

Ours was but one of several houses then in the early stages of construction. We were brought in close contact with our neighbors who were facing similar problems, the two primary ones being the building of a home and the rearing of a family. The wives spent their afternoons together conferring on these momentous problems. Out of our informal meetings there sprang a "literary" club which grew into the Hastings Women's Club. It was made up of the wives of the artists, professors, scientists, doctors, and high school teachers who made up our little colony. There was an inclination, among both husbands and wives, to sink back into a complacent suburban attitude, to enjoy petty middle class comforts. For the wives, the height of adventure was a day "in town"—a shopping expedition followed by a bargain matinee. This adventure would furnish conversation for us all. At the "literary" club we read papers on Browning, George Eliot, Shakespeare, closely following the suggestions of the courses given at Columbia University.

But deep in my soul I could not suppress my own dissatisfaction with the futility of such interests. After my experience in "the midst of life" as a nurse, after my long ordeal with disease, it seemed to me that this quiet withdrawal into the tame domesticity of the pretty hillside suburb was bordering on spiritual stagnation. But I was not articulate enough to express this even to myself.

Meanwhile our house was nearing completion. It was "modern" in architecture, one of the first of its kind in this vicinity. It was even called a "show" house, and people came from far to study its simple design and the unadorned surfaces of the fireproof stucco of its walls.

Great was our anticipation of the day of its completion. For weeks we both worked on our "rose window," which was to surmount the open staircase which led upstairs from the library. Every petal had been cut, leaded, and welded together by our own hands. After the baby had been put to bed, we worked far into the night. It seemed to me as if this rose window was the very symbol of the stability of

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PEGGY

our future. As in every detail of our house, we aimed for permanence and security. We were certain that we would live the rest of our lives here together and that this rose window was a great achievement of beauty and design which welded together both our efforts and expressed an indestructible unity.

At last our furniture was moved in. Carpenters and painters were pushed out. Everything was completed and finished. The vans arrived about four o'clock in the afternoon with their precious loads. Our few but precious antiques were carefully unpacked. Tapestries long in storage radiated their beauty. We impatiently opened boxes and barrels, removing this treasure and that, temporarily trying out their beauty against our immaculate walls and floors. Rugs were spread out, paintings hung up, wrappings removed. It was like a welcome home to our cherished belongings. Weary at last but like happy children on Christmas Eve, we tumbled into bed. We were rudely awakened a few hours later by a pounding at the door and the shout of the German maid—"Madam, come! come! A fire in the big stove!" The house was on fire!

There was no telephone within half a mile of the house. My husband ran in his night clothes to sound the alarm, but it was already too late.

I carried my terror-stricken son Stuart to the top of the staircase. Flames were then leaping through one side of it. I was confronted with a terrific danger: dare I venture down those steps? I knew I must. I put the bath robe over the child's head, and pressing close to the other side of the wall I descended cautiously but finally in safety. I crossed the street to our nearest neighbor's. I tucked the youngster into an impromptu bed with a prayer of gratitude that we had escaped with our lives.

In a few moments the flames that were consuming the staircase had swept through our preciously beautiful rose window! This I realized as I stood gazing from the neighbor's window into the night.

It was a moonlit night in February. It had rained earlier,

and the rain had frozen into crystals on the branches of trees and shrubbery. It was fantastically, unbelievably beautiful. In that setting of unreality the flames, as if directed by devilish intent, spurted only through our prized leaded rose window.

I stood silently watching the effort of months of our work and love slowly disintegrate. Petal by petal, it succumbed to the licking flames; one by one they fell into the frozen snow. I recalled our cut fingers, our bleeding hands, our irritated nerves, our fatigued eyes, all the loving hopes and ambitions which had gone into that window. It had taken so long to weld those things together, to overcome all the difficult obstacles! Now, relentlessly, they were pulled apart, melted by flames. This thing of beauty had perished in a few minutes.

I stood there amazed, but I was certain of a relief, of a burden lifted, a spirit set free. It was as if a chapter of my life had been brought to a close. I was neither disappointed nor regretful. I knew I had finished something. Somewhere in the back of my mind I saw the absurdity of placing all of one's hopes, all of one's efforts, involving as they did heartaches, debts, and worries, in the creation of something external that could perish irretrievably in the course of a few moments. Subconsciously I must have learned the lesson of the futility of material things. My scale of suburban values had been consumed by the flames, just as my precious rose window of leaded glass had been demolished.

Finally I turned from the window where I stood gazing with dry eyes into that fantastic night. I sank into the bed the hospitable neighbor had placed at my disposal and dropped immediately into a profound slumber with my small sleeping boy hugged tight in my arms.

Fortunately, the construction of the house was fireproof, and while the inside woodwork, doors and floors were badly damaged there was the possibility of quick restoration. Within a few months the place was renewed, and life went on apparently as if the fire had never been. But to me all was different.

There was a lapse of five years between my first and second child, also a son. I was delighted to resume being a mother

I gloried in my recaptured health. I wanted four children; I yearned especially for a daughter. If I were to bear more children I was convinced I should have them closer together than five years. So it was that twenty months after the birth of Grant my long desired daughter was born. She was named Peggy, and later her vivacious strength, vivacity and intelligence surpassed even my wildest hopes.

A new spirit was awakening within me; a strong, insistent urge to be in the current of life's activities. I felt as if we had drifted into a swamp and had to wait for the tide to set us free. The fire, the destruction of the rose window had done this. I was never happy in that house again. The first opportunity we had to sell it we let it go. We moved our three children back to New York to take our part individually or collectively in the great Pageant of Living.

My three children were to develop in divergent ways. Their childhood years seemed to speed by, so swift was their growth. At the time of my great awakening they were just at the ages when they were most interesting and adorable—four, six, and ten years. Owing to my own frail health I had spent much time with them, planning their lives, reading and playing with each in his turn. They were all so individual, so different, that each was a study. Stuart, the oldest, was sturdy, active, athletic, reasoning, daring and logical. He seemed one who had been born into life to test and prove himself. Grant, the next child, five years younger than Stuart, was the artist type—loving, affectionate, original. He was the embodiment of a talent come to express itself. Peggy, the most independent child I ever knew, was positive, accurate, truthful, mischievous, laughing. She was born to *do,* to act, to lead. She had the qualities of a person of power even at the age of five. Peggy was blonde as Grant was dark, daring as he was cautious, leader as he was follower. They seemed to complement each other in every way. They spoke in terms of "we" always from the time Peggy talked at all.

My life seemed to begin and end in their development and growth. My activities and interests and work outside seemed

only for the purpose of completing and perfecting their lives. I was never slavishly domestic, but I was inclined to be slavishly maternal.

Housekeeping with its endless details was never drudgery to me. There was always the interest of conquering the problems, which made it fun. Uninvited guests of family and friends had a way of dropping in upon us for meals, or visits, when money was scarce and food just enough to go round, but I soon learned that good friends, understanding companions, inspiring conversations fed a deep need in our lives. The give and take, the sharing what we had, all helped to enrich tenfold our family life.

The children's father worshipped them and filled my life with love and devotion.

Here, then, was a full and happy life and a frail, shy woman, satisfied with her domestic career, knowing few people, lacking wealth, power, position, technique of intrigue; never dreaming that suddenly she would be thrust forth into the night of turmoil, uncertainty and despair.

* * * * * *

During the twelve years of my married life my three children and my later nursing work combined to give me many and various problems to think about. Constantly I saw the ill effects of childbearing on women of the poor. Mothers whose physical condition was inadequate to combat disease were made pregnant, through ignorance and love, and died. Children were left motherless, fathers were left hopeless and desperate, often feeling like criminals, blaming themselves for the wife's death—all because these mothers were denied by law knowledge to prevent conception.

My own motherhood was joyous, loving, happy. I wanted to share these joys with other women. I longed to see Motherhood come into its own—the flower of Womanhood. I had thought and thought, pondered over it all. Since the birth of my first child I had realized the importance of spacing babies, but only a few months before had I fully grasped the significant fact that a powerful law denied and prevented

mothers from obtaining knowledge to properly space their families. This was so outrageous, so cruel, so useless a law that I could not respect it. I could not believe that it would have the force of the government behind it were it challenged. I believed at the time that when the government knew the facts it would not and could not put that law into operation. I longed to prove its bad effects, to show up its destructive force on women's and children's lives. I was convinced in my heart that the *spirit* of the law would be interpreted and not the *letter* of the law. Little did I anticipate the future battle royal: Women's, mothers', children's lives against a worn-out parchment!

III

AWAKENING AND REVOLT

EARLY in the year 1912 I came to a sudden realization that my work as a nurse and my activities in social service were entirely palliative and consequently futile and useless to relieve the misery I saw all about me.

For several years I had had the good fortune to have the children's paternal grandmother living with us and sharing in their care, thereby releasing more of my time and renewed energy for the many activities and professional work of the nursing field. I had longed for this opportunity, and it now enabled me to share in the financial responsibility of the home, which, owing to the heavy expenditures caused by my illness, I felt was the only self-respecting thing to do. I eventually took special obstetrical and surgical cases assigned to me from time to time, and had glimpses into the lives of rich and poor alike.

When I look back upon that period it seems only a short time ago; yet in the brief interval conditions have changed enormously. At that time it was not the usual thing for a

poor woman to go to a hospital to give birth to her baby. She preferred to stay at home. She was afraid of hospitals when any serious ailment was involved. That is not the case today. Women of all classes are more likely to have their babies in lying-in hospitals or in private sanatoriums than at home; but in those days a woman's own bedroom, no matter how inconveniently arranged, was the usual place for confinement. That was the day of home nursing, and it gave a trained nurse splendid opportunities to learn social conditions through actual contact with them.

Were it possible for me to depict the revolting conditions existing in the homes of some of the women I attended in that one year, one would find it hard to believe. There was at that time, and doubtless is still today, a sub-stratum of men and women whose lives are absolutely untouched by social agencies.

The way they live is almost beyond belief. They hate and fear any prying into their homes or into their lives. They resent being talked to. The women slink in and out of their homes on their way to market like rats from their holes. The men beat their wives sometimes black and blue, but no one interferes. The children are cuffed, kicked and chased about, but woe to the child who dares to tell tales out of the home! Crime or drink is often the source of this secret aloofness; usually there is something to hide, a skeleton in the closet somewhere. The men are sullen, unskilled workers, picking up odd jobs now and then, unemployed usually, sauntering in and out of the house at all hours of the day and night.

The women keep apart from other women in the neighborhood. Often they are suspected of picking a pocket or "lifting" an article when occasion arises. Pregnancy is an almost chronic condition amongst them. I knew one woman who had given birth to eight children with no professional care whatever. The last one was born in the kitchen, witnessed by a son of ten years who, under his mother's direction, cleaned the bed, wrapped the placenta and soiled articles in paper, and threw them out of the window into the court below.

They reject help of any kind and want you to "mind your own business." Birth and death they consider their own affairs. They survive as best they can, suspicious of everyone, deathly afraid of police and officials of every kind.

They are the submerged, untouched classes which no labor union, no church nor organization of a highly expensive, organized city ever reaches and rarely tries to reach. They are beyond the scope of organized charity or religion; not even the Salvation Army touches them. It was a sad consolation to hear other women in the stratum just slightly above breathe contented sighs and thank God that they had not sunk so low as that.

It is among the mothers here that the most difficult problems arise—the outcasts of society with theft, filth, perjury, cruelty, brutality oozing from beneath.

Ignorance and neglect go on day by day; children born to breathe but a few hours and pass out of life; pregnant women toiling early and late to give food to four or five children, always hungry; boarders taken into homes where there is not sufficient room for the family; little girls eight and ten years of age sleeping in the same room with dirty, foul smelling, loathsome men; women whose weary, pregnant, shapeless bodies refuse to accommodate themselves to the husbands' desires find husbands looking with lustful eyes upon other women, sometimes upon their own little daughters, six and seven years of age.

In this atmosphere abortions and birth become the main theme of conversation. On Saturday nights I have seen groups of fifty to one hundred women going into questionable offices well known in the community for cheap abortions. I asked several women what took place there, and they all gave the same reply: a quick examination, a probe inserted into the uterus and turned a few times to disturb the fertilized ovum, and then the woman was sent home. Usually the flow began the next day and often continued four or five weeks. Sometimes an ambulance carried the victim to the hospital for a

curetage, and if she returned home at all she was looked upon as a lucky woman.

This state of things became a nightmare with me. There seemed no sense to it all, no reason for such waste of mother life, no right to exhaust women's vitality and to throw them on the scrap-heap before the age of thirty-five.

Everywhere I looked, misery and fear stalked—men fearful of losing their jobs, women fearful that even worse conditions might come upon them. The menace of another pregnancy hung like a sword over the head of every poor woman I came in contact with that year. The question which met me was always the same: What can I do to keep from it? or, What can I do to get out of this? Sometimes they talked among themselves bitterly.

"It's the rich that know the tricks," they'd say, "while we have all the kids." Then, if the women were Roman Catholics, they talked about "Yankee tricks," and asked me if I knew what the Protestants did to keep their families down. When I said that I didn't believe that the rich knew much more than they did I was laughed at and suspected of holding back information for money. They would nudge each other and say something about paying me before I left the case if I would reveal the "secret."

It all sickened me. It was heartbreaking to witness the rapt, anxious, eager expression on their pale, worried faces as I told them necessary details concerning cleanliness and hygiene of their sex organs. It was appalling how little they knew of the terms I was using, yet how familiar they were with those organs and their functions and how unafraid to try anything, no matter what the results.

I heard over and over again of their desperate efforts at bringing themselves "around"—drinking various herb-teas, taking drops of turpentine on sugar, steaming over a chamber of boiling coffee or of turpentine water, rolling down stairs, and finally inserting slippery-elm sticks, or knitting needles, or shoe hooks into the uterus. I used to shudder with horror as I heard the details and, worse yet, learned of the condi-

tions *behind the reason* for such desperate actions. Day after day these stories were poured into my ears. I knew hundreds of these women personally, and knew much of their hopeless, barren, dreary lives.

What relief I had came when I shifted my work for a few weeks to the then fashionable Riverside Drive or to the upper western section of New York City, but inevitably I was called back into the lower East or West Side as if magnetically attracted by its misery.

The contrast in conditions seemed only to intensify the horrors of those poverty-stricken homes, and each time I returned it was to hear that Mrs. Cohen had been carried to a hospital but had never come back, that Mrs. Kelly had sent the children to a neighbor's and had put her head into the gas oven to end her misery. Many of the women had consulted midwives, social workers and doctors at the dispensary and asked a way to limit their families, but they were denied this help, sometimes indignantly or gruffly, sometimes jokingly; but always knowledge was denied them. Life for them had but one choice: either to abandon themselves to incessant childbearing, or to terminate their pregnancies through abortions. Is it any wonder they resigned themselves hopelessly, as the Jewish and Italian mothers, or fell into drunkenness, as the Irish and Scotch? The latter were often beaten by husbands, as well as by their sons and daughters. They were driven and cowed, and only as beasts of burden were allowed to exist. Life for them was full of fear.

Words fail to express the impressions these lives made on my sensitive nature. My own happy love life became a reproach. These other lives began to clutch at all I held dear. The intimate knowledge of these misshapen, hapless, desperate women seemed to separate me from the right of happiness.

They claimed my thoughts night and day. One by one these women, with their worried, sad, pensive and ageing faces would marshal themselves before me in my dreams,

sometimes appealingly, sometimes accusingly. I could not escape from the facts of their misery, neither was I able to see the way out of their problems and their troubles. Like one walking in a sleep, I kept on.

Finally the thing began to shape itself, to become accumulative during the three weeks I spent in the home of a desperately sick woman living on Grand Street, a lower section of New York's East Side.

Mrs. Sacks was only twenty-eight years old; her husband, an unskilled worker, thirty-two. Three children, aged five, three and one, were none too strong nor sturdy, and it took all the earnings of the father and the ingenuity of the mother to keep them clean, provide them with air and proper food, and give them a chance to grow into decent manhood and womanhood.

Both parents were devoted to these children and to each other. The woman had become pregnant and had taken various drugs and purgatives, as advised by her neighbors. Then, in desperation, she had used some instrument lent to her by a friend. She was found prostrate on the floor amidst the crying children when her husband returned from work. Neighbors advised against the ambulance, and a friendly doctor was called. The husband would not hear of her going to a hospital, and as a little money had been saved in the bank a nurse was called and the battle for that precious life began.

It was in the middle of July. The three-room apartment was turned into a hospital for the dying patient. Never had I worked so fast, never so concentratedly as I did to keep alive that little mother. Neighbor women came and went during the day doing the odds and ends necessary for our comfort. The children were sent to friends and relatives and the doctor and I settled ourselves to outdo the force and power of an outraged nature.

Never had I know such conditions could exist. July's sultry days and nights were melted into a torpid inferno. Day after

day, night after night, I slept only in brief snatches, ever too anxious about the condition of that feeble heart bravely carrying on, to stay long from the bedside of the patient. With but one toilet for the building and that on the floor below, everything had to be carried down for disposal, while ice, food and other necessities had to be carried three flights up. It was one of those old airshaft buildings of which there were several thousands then standing in New York City.

At the end of two weeks recovery was in sight, and at the end of three weeks I was preparing to leave the fragile patient to take up the ordinary duties of her life, including those of wifehood and motherhood. Everyone was congratulating her on her recovery. All the kindness of sympathetic and understanding neighbors poured in upon her in the shape of convalescent dishes, soups, custards, and drinks. Still she appeared to be despondent and worried. She seemed to sit apart in her thoughts as if she had no part in these congratulatory messages and endearing welcomes. I thought at first that she still retained some of her unconscious memories and dwelt upon them in her silences.

But as the hour for my departure came nearer, her anxiety increased, and finally with trembling voice she said: "Another baby will finish me, I suppose."

"It's too early to talk about that," I said, and resolved that I would turn the question over to the doctor for his advice. When he came I said: "Mrs. Sacks is worried about having another baby."

"She well might be," replied the doctor, and then he stood before her and said: "Any more such capers, young woman, and there will be no need to call me."

"Yes, yes—I know, Doctor," said the patient with trembling voice, "but," and she hesitated as if it took all of her courage to say it, "*what* can I do to prevent getting that way again?"

"Oh ho!" laughed the doctor good naturedly, "You want your cake while you eat it too, do you? Well, it can't be done." Then, familiarly slapping her on the back and pick-

ing up his hat and bag to depart, he said: "I'll tell you the only sure thing to do. Tell Jake to sleep on the roof!"

With those words he closed the door and went down the stairs, leaving us both petrified and stunned.

Tears sprang to my eyes, and a lump came in my throat as I looked at that face before me. It was stamped with sheer horror. I thought for a moment she might have gone insane, but she conquered her feelings, whatever they may have been, and turning to me in desperation said: "He can't understand, can he?—he's a man after all—but you do, don't you? You're a woman and you'll tell me the secret and I'll never tell it to a soul."

She clasped her hands as if in prayer, she leaned over and looked straight into my eyes and beseechingly implored me to tell her something—something *I really did not know.* It was like being on a rack and tortured for a crime one had not committed. To plead guilty would stop the agony; otherwise the rack kept turning.

I had to turn away from that imploring face. I could not answer her then. I quieted her as best I could. She saw that I was moved by the tears in my eyes. I promised that I would come back in a few days and tell her what she wanted to know. The few simple means of limiting the family like *coitus interruptus* or the condom were laughed at by the neighboring women when told these were the means used by men in the well-to-do families. That was not believed, and I knew such an answer would be swept aside as useless were I to tell her this at such a time.

A little later when she slept I left the house, and made up my mind that I'd keep away from those cases in the future. I felt helpless to do anything at all. I seemed chained hand and foot, and longed for an earthquake or a volcano to shake the world out of its lethargy into facing these monstrous atrocities.

The intelligent reasoning of the young mother—how to *prevent* getting that way again—how sensible, how just she

had been—yes, I promised myself I'd go back and have a long talk with her and tell her more, and perhaps she would not laugh but would believe that those methods were all that were really known.

But time flew past, and weeks rolled into months. That wistful, appealing face haunted me day and night. I could not banish from my mind memories of that trembling voice begging so humbly for knowledge she had a right to have. I was about to retire one night three months later when the telephone rang and an agitated man's voice begged me to come at once to help his wife who was sick again. It was the husband of Mrs. Sacks, and I intuitively knew before I left the telephone that it was almost useless to go.

I dreaded to face that woman. I was tempted to send someone else in my place. I longed for an accident on the subway, or on the street—anything to prevent my going into that home. But on I went just the same. I arrived a few minutes after the doctor, the same one who had given her such noble advice. The woman was dying. She was unconscious. She died within ten minutes after my arrival. It was the same result, the same story told a thousand times before—death from abortion. She had become pregnant, had used drugs, had then consulted a five-dollar professional abortionist, and death followed.

The doctor shook his head as he rose from listening for the heart beat. I knew she had already passed on; without a groan, a sigh or recognition of our belated presence she had gone into the Great Beyond as thousands of mothers go every year. I looked at that drawn face now stilled in death. I placed her thin hands across her breast and recalled how hard they had pleaded with me on that last memorable occasion of parting. The gentle woman, the devoted mother, the loving wife had passed on leaving behind her a frantic husband, helpless in his loneliness, bewildered in his helplessness as he paced up and down the room, hands clenching his head, moaning "My God! My God! My God!"

The Revolution came—but not as it has been pictured nor as history relates that revolutions have come. It came in my own life. It began in my very being as I walked home that night after I had closed the eyes and covered with a sheet the body of that little helpless mother whose life had been sacrificed to ignorance.

After I left that desolate house I walked and walked and walked; for hours and hours I kept on, bag in hand, thinking, regretting, dreading to stop; fearful of my conscience, dreading to face my own accusing soul. At three in the morning I arrived home still clutching a heavy load the weight of which I was quite unconscious.

I entered the house quietly, as was my custom, and looked out of the window down upon the dimly lighted, sleeping city. As I stood at the window and looked out, the miseries and problems of that sleeping city arose before me in a clear vision like a panorama: crowded homes, too many children; babies dying in infancy; mothers overworked; baby nurseries; children neglected and hungry—mothers so nervously wrought they could not give the little things the comfort nor care they needed; mothers half sick most of their lives—"always ailing, never failing"; women made into drudges; children working in cellars; children aged six and seven pushed into the labor market to help earn a living; another baby on the way; still another; yet another; a baby born dead—great relief; an older child dies—sorrow, but nevertheless relief—insurance helps; a mother's death—children scattered into institutions; the father, desperate, drunken; he slinks away to become an outcast in a society which has trapped him.

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Another picture of the young couple full of hope with faith in themselves. They start life fresh. They are brave and courageous. The first baby is welcome; parents and relatives come from near and far to witness this mystery. The next year the second baby arrives; all agree it's a little early, but husband receives congratulations. The third child arrives, and

yet a fourth. Within five years four children are born. The mother, racked and worn, decides this can't go on, and attempts to interrupt the next pregnancy. The siren of the ambulance—death of the mother—orphan children—poverty, misery, slums, child labor, unhappiness, ignorance, destitution!

One after another these pictures unreeled themselves before me. For hours I stood, motionless and tense, expecting something to happen. I watched the lights go out, I saw the darkness gradually give way to the first shimmer of dawn, and then a colorful sky heralded the rise of the sun. I knew a new day had come for me and a new world as well.

It was like an illumination. I could now see clearly the various social strata of our life; all its mass problems seemed to be centered around uncontrolled breeding. There was only one thing to be done: call out, start the alarm, set the heather on fire! Awaken the womanhood of America to free the motherhood of the world! I released from my almost paralyzed hand the nursing bag which unconsciously I had clutched, threw it across the room, tore the uniform from my body, flung it into a corner, and renounced all palliative work forever.

I would never go back again to nurse women's ailing bodies while their miseries were as vast as the stars. I was now finished with superficial cures, with doctors and nurses and social workers who were brought face to face with this overwhelming truth of women's needs and yet turned to pass on the other side. They must be made to see these facts. I resolved that women should have knowledge of contraception. They have every right to know about their own bodies. I would strike out—I would scream from the housetops. I would tell the world what was going on in the lives of these poor women. I *would* be heard. No matter what it should cost. *I would be heard.*

I went to bed and slept.

That decision gave me the first undisturbed sleep I had

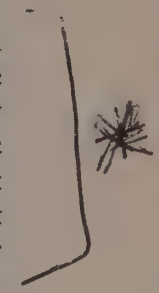
had in over a year. I slept soundly and free from dreams, free from haunting faces.

I announced to my family the following day that I had finished nursing, that I would never go on another case—and I never have.

II

I asked doctors what one could do and was told I'd better keep off that subject or Anthony Comstock would get me. I was told that there were laws against that sort of thing. This was the reply from every medical man and woman I approached.

Then I consulted the "up and doing" progressive women who then called themselves Feminists. Most of them were shocked at the mention of abortion, while others were scarcely able to keep from laughing at the idea of my making a public campaign around the idea of too many children. "It can't be done," they said. "You are too sympathetic. You can't do a thing about it until we get the vote. Go home to your children and let things alone."



When I review the situation and see myself in the eyes of those who gave me such circumspect advice, I can see what they felt. I was considered a conservative person, bourgeoise from the radical point of view. I was not trained in the arts of the propagandist, I had no money with which to start a rousing campaign. I was not a trained writer nor speaker, never having lifted my voice in public above the throng. I had no social position. I had no influential friends. I was digging deep into an illegal subject, alone and unaided. It seemed to them that I was scheduled for Blackwell's Island or the penitentiary, and it looked as if I was determined to get there.

I spent my time reading in the vain hope that I would get the "secret" women were asking for. I read Havelock Ellis' then forbidden volumes of "Psychology of Sex" in one gulp, and had psychic indigestion for several months afterwards.

The following spring found me still seeking and more de-

termined than ever to find out something about contraception and its mysteries. Why was it so difficult to obtain information on this subject? Where was it hidden? Why would no one discuss it? It was like the missing link in the evolution of medical science. It was like the lost trail in the journey toward freedom. Seek it I would. If it was in existence it should be found. I would never give up until I had obtained it, nor stop until the working women of my generation in the country of my birth were acquainted with its substance. I was so settled in this determination that I ceased to worry further about the details of how this should be brought about. I approached this problem in a manner characteristic of my makeup. I settled the principle first and left the details to work themselves out. In other words, I put some of the burden of this great task into the hands of the gods.

The effect of this conviction, however, began to have a tremendous bearing upon my personal life. My three lovely, healthy children were full of life, vigor and happiness. They were glorious examples of wanted children, mentally and physically. Gradually, however, there came over me the feeling and dread that the road to my goal was to separate me from their lives, from their development, growth and happiness. The feeling grew stronger and stronger within me, and this, together with my temporary psychic indigestion, led me to gather the three of them onto a Fall River boat one late afternoon in June and sail off to Provincetown, Massachusetts.

I tried to run away from life, from its turmoil and perplexities. I wanted the quiet of the sea, the loneliness of the dunes, to be alone with myself forever. I wanted to have the children solely to myself, too. I wanted to drive away that descending, foreboding barrier of separation by closer contact with them. I wanted to feed, to bathe, to clothe them myself. I wanted to bind them to me and allow nothing to force us apart. I clutched at them like a drowning woman in a raging current, as if to save myself from its swiftness.

In Provincetown I rented a small cottage on the beach far

on the outskirts of the picturesque Cape Cod village, toward Truro. In 1913 Provincetown was not the busy resort of artists and art students it has become these summers, now that policemen are needed to control the incessant motor traffic.

We found ourselves among a congenial group of social rebels and writers: Mary Heaton Vorse, the social leader of this group, and her husband, Joseph O'Brien; Hutchins Hapgood and his charming wife, the novelist Neith Boyce; Charles Hawthorne, who had discovered Provincetown for his fellow artists and conducted a summer school there. It was not until 1914 that the hegira to Provincetown began; not until 1916 that the Provincetown Players were organized and gave the first production of a play by Eugene O'Neill on a dilapidated wharf belonging to Mary Heaton Vorse.

Our own cottage verandah faced the bay, and when the tide was high the children would sit on the steps and dip their toes into the water. When the tide was out we had two miles of beach for our front yard on which they skipped and ran. These days were filled with the joy of playing and romping with the children, away from the turmoil and from the ever pulling desire to be into the fight and battle of life. It was a wonderful place in which to forget the woes of the world.

The late William D. Haywood—"Big Bill," as he was affectionately called—was in Provincetown that summer. He had been East advising the workers in Paterson who had been on strike in the silk mills. His health was failing, and the strain of work had put him on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Jessie Ashley, that aristocratic rebel gentlewoman, had carried "Bill" off for a much needed rest by the sea.

This picturesque hero of the Western Federation of Miners reminded me of the giant Polyphemus I had read about in the Odyssey as a child. One of his eyes had been destroyed in some violent mine explosion. This gave him the habit of turning his head slightly when he looked at you. He gave the impression of a bull ready to attack an adversary. In reality "Big Bill" was as gentle as a child. His frame was enormous; he was like a giant in stature. He had emerged

from the celebrated Haywood-Moyer-Pettibone case in Butte, Montana, an intransigent rebel against the then existing conditions of the workers. Like his young friend, John Reed, poor Bill was destined years later to die the death of an exile in Soviet Russia.

But that summer in Provincetown our outlook was sanguine, and there was no shadow of disillusion on the horizon of our sky-blue hopes.

Bill came to see me often. We talked and read together day after day. He was a keen student of human nature, though like many American men he knew nothing of the finer sensibilities of woman's being. Still, I remember a remark of his one day as we walked along the beach. "Say girl," he said, "you're getting ready to kick over the traces!"

Then, taking my hand and pointing to the children, he added: "Don't do anything to spoil their happiness—will you?"

Despite the joy of those days I knew that I was only delaying the inevitable. It was no use. I could not forget the mothers bringing to birth children in poverty and misery. Even the fishermen's wives in Provincetown had the same dread, the same problems and fear of pregnancy as the workingmen's wives in the slums of New York. They were like a great army of untouchables. Their voices were never raised, their agonies were unrevealed, their hopelessness ignored by church and society. This, the greatest of problems, as untouched as if it did not exist.

I went back and forth to Boston during these months to study in the medical library, ever seeking the information which was to relieve women of the burden of unlimited childbearing.

At the end of six months I was convinced that there was no practical medical information on contraception available in America. I had visited the Library of Congress in Washington, I had pored over books in the library of the New York Academy of Medicine and in the Boston Public Library, to find only the information no more reliable than that already obtainable from "back fence gossip" in any small town. It was

discouraging to contemplate, but I refused to accept defeat.

Since childhood I had always been interested in social and political questions and had looked thoroughly into Free Trade, Socialism of its various kinds and schools, Syndicalism, as well as the theories of the Industrial Workers of the World. While I had heard of Malthus and knew there was a Malthusian doctrine, I had associated it in my mind with overpopulation and economic pressure, and not with knowledge of contraception or any artificial means of family limitation.

I had previously cast my lot with the women of the Socialist movement. I listened intently to all debates, arguments and theories of this great school of liberal thought. Their ardent and passionate faith in legislation, however, I could never share. Their answer to the misery of women and the ignorance of contraceptive knowledge was like that of the Feminists: "Wait until we get the vote to put *us* in power!"

Wherever I turned, from every one I approached I met the same answer: "Wait!" "Wait until women get the vote." "Wait until the Socialists are in power." "Wait for the Social Revolution." "Wait for the Industrial Revolution." Thus I lost my faith in the social schemes and organizations of that day.

Only the boys of the I.W.W. seemed to grasp the economic significance of this great social question. At once they visualized its importance, and instead of saying "Wait" they gave me names of organizers in the silk, woolen and copper industries, and offered their assistance to get any facts on family limitation I secured direct to the workingmen and their wives.

Again "Big Bill" Haywood came to my aid with that cheering encouragement of which I was so sorely in need. He never wasted words in advising me to "wait." I owe him a debt of gratitude which I am proud to acknowledge. It was he who suggested that I go to France and see for myself the conditions resulting from generations of family limitation. This idea, together with my interest in the social experiment then going on in Glasgow, convinced me that I was to find new ways to solve old problems in Europe. I decided to go and see.

IV

EUROPE BEFORE THE WAR

IN THE late autumn of 1913 the Sanger family set sail from Boston bound for Glasgow, and then for Paris, where I intended to gather practical information on contraception.

"But how was this trip financed?" asks the money-minded reader, who wonders how an impecunious artist, his visionary young wife, and three offspring, could thus set out for Europe, taking no thought of the morrow.

Such questions always annoy me. I cannot remember how trips were financed. I don't really know how most of my ventures in this work were ever financed. I am of no economical turn of mind. I do things first, and somehow or another they get paid for. If I had waited to finance my various battles for birth control, I do not suppose they ever would have become realities. I suppose here is the real difference between the idealist—or the "fanatic," as we are called—and the ordinary "normal" human being.

The history of the accomplishment of the birth control movement has been a series of activities where vision and aim

have preceded any consideration of the financing of its requirements. The important, outstanding events, such as the publication of *The Woman Rebel,* my study in England, Holland, France, and Germany, the international conference of 1925, the establishment of clinics, the Zurich conference, and many, many other ventures have been inaugurated and brought to success on the motive of the initial inspiration, without knowing where the financial requirements were to come from.

I don't know today how the recent Zurich conference was financed, really. I never planned to get the money first and then do the work according to the money in hand. I saw the thing to do, and then began to do it; and inevitably, without fail, the money came to pay for it. Printing bills, conferences, salaries for employees, drives, all were the same. When the urge to do an important thing came, I did it regardless of the money on hand or the possibility of getting it. Often when a letter of importance was to be sent broadcast to the friends of the movement I was confronted by a bank account so low that even the rent could not be paid. I always went ahead and inevitably the account doubled.

The trip to Europe, however, seemed so urgent, so necessary, that no matter what future sacrifices had to be made we would make them when we came to them. An inventory of our finances was taken. Our house in the suburbs had been sold. This money, together with the savings from our combined labor of years which was invested for our children's future education, had now to be drawn upon for study and preparation by this, our first and long-desired trip abroad.

Our stay in Glasgow, which preceded our visit to Paris, was most illuminating. Here was a city under municipal ownership government which had been so successful for the past twenty-five years that it was about to pay off the last debt on its railways. Socialists turned to it as to a victory which they invited all to witness. I went to learn all I could. Perhaps here at last women received consideration. Municipal ownership sounded big and fine in those days. I was certain to find encouraging data here.

I went the rounds of the markets, the schools, the playgrounds, the laundries, bakeries, and at last the houses. The excellent living quarters for the workers were held as an example for the rest of the world. For so many rooms, so much light, so many people to a square foot, no overcrowding allowed. For a one-child family, so many rooms; for a two-child family, so many more; three—and there the story closes.

"Well," I asked, "what happens when they have five or six children?"

"Oh, they can't live here," replied the attendant. "They must live elsewhere."

"But where?" said I. Conversation ceased. I was looked upon as a trouble-maker and not encouraged to look further. Nevertheless I was out for facts, and I wanted to know what a municipal government did with its families of six, seven and eight children. I soon learned that they were huddled in crowded quarters in various parts of the city or its outskirts, but mainly in the shipyard districts far from the privileges of the municipal bakeries, laundries, markets or tram service. Municipal ownership was successful *only* where the size of the family was considered and limited.

Then I came face to face with the facts, and realized that only a controlled fertility in human beings can maintain any progress. No system of society depending for its continuation on intelligent humans can stand long unless it encourages the control of the birth rate and includes contraceptive knowledge as a right. Without it no system, no matter what its ideals, can withstand the overpowering force of uncontrolled, unrestricted fecundity. I was convinced of this when I left Glasgow.

No sight in this world could be worse than the women of that city walking through the streets at midnight dragging two or three little children beside them calling out "Bread, bread!" More untouchables, which even a mighty municipal government ignored. Thousands of them, huddled together in their filth, bodies clothed in rags, drink their only relief—these women, ignored by governments and religions, are the

GRANT AND PEGGY SAYING GOODBYE TO MOTHER

THREE CHILDREN WERE A CURIOSITY IN PARIS
Grant, Peggy and Stuart Sanger, March, 1914

great untouchables of the world reduced to a state of abject servility by the much vaunted glories of motherhood.

Glasgow was a distinct disappointment. Municipal ownership could not solve the problems of women and children. Two weeks was enough to prove beyond a doubt that it was a surface cure. It could not probe the depths of the disease.

The only beauty I found in Glasgow was the trip by night through the city on the river Clyde. That was a fairyland of enchantment. The shipbuilding of 1913 was in full swing, and every shipyard was running double shifts to get ready those modern palaces of the seas. This beauty by night was the redeeming feature of my visit there.

Meanwhile, William Sanger was anxious to get settled in a studio in Paris. The architect was hungry for some more creative expression than the building of suburban homes. And I was not sorry to turn my thoughts from the misery of those slum mothers with their shrill crying voices to thoughts of Paris.

One dull rainy day a little later when the cold seemed to penetrate to the very marrow of our bones, the Sangers, five in number, embarked upon a miserable little steamer bound for Antwerp. How seasick we were as the little boat bounced and tossed through the stormy North Sea! The children were thrown out of their beds. Twenty-six horses in the hold had to be shot, their legs having been broken in the storm.

* * * * * *

We were glad to land at Antwerp and to speed on our way to Paris. Paris in 1913 was not the Paris of today. The Gare du Nord, where we arrived with our three tired, hungry children, seemed a veritable madhouse. At a near-by cafe we ordered milk for the children and were given three foaming glasses of beer!

Paris was at first a distinct disappointment too. My dream of Paris as a place of gayety and elegance was rudely shattered. Arriving there as we did at the end of a cold dismal October day, it seemed like another Glasgow. Even the children were dressed in drab, gloomy black aprons. The atmos-

phere of petty penury, of pinched poverty, destroyed my illusions and made us homesick at once.

We went straight to an hôtel. Within a day or two we found a quaint apartment on the Left Bank, on the Boulevard St. Michel near the Val de Grace. William Sanger found a studio in the Impasse du Maine, in back of the Gare Montparnasse. The children attended school, and I began to delve into the population question.

We were well armed with letters of introduction to artists, writers, editors, leaders of the liberal and radical movement. Many of them were obscure in those days, but today they are the leaders of French thought and politics.

There was a feeling of unrest in the air. Many anti-German war plays were being produced in the Paris theatres, most of them based upon the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 and the problem of Alsace-Lorraine. *"Revanche!"* was the echo in the very air—"Revenge!" Placards bearing that catchword were placed in the tomb of Napoleon.

One of the most interesting and the most friendly of the French liberals we came to know was the patriarchal Victor Dave, undaunted veteran of many a battle for social justice, and then the only survivor of the French Commune.

We celebrated Thanksgiving Day in our own apartment. We had invited a few American friends to come to meet Victor Dave. Thanksgiving Day loses its significance in Europe, but it was an occasion nevertheless for bringing together French and American men and women having the same interests and ideals.

Victor Dave was then past eighty. He was mentally keen and active, speaking the English language far better than any of us spoke French. He was called on to speak during the evening, and arose to predict a world calamity of an impending war which was greeted with frank amusement by us all. He said he had that past week been at work translating for the French government several treaties of forty years' standing which had just expired. These treaties were concerned with the Balkan States. He was one of the few Frenchmen who

could translate the languages of the Balkan States, as well as the several dialects. For this rare accomplishment he received in payment from the French government a sum which at that time was equivalent to three dollars a week. He lived on this salary, and laughed at life's absurdities. When he spoke to us that night he was serious and sad. He said what he had to tell us was to be considered confidential. He then went on to say that within five years Europe would be plunged into the greatest war of history. He had read the treaties; they had outrun their time; they would not be renewed. From the new agreements then being written he could see the writing on the wall: War! All of Europe was to be plunged into war!

This news was taken with shrugged shoulders by those present. "Getting old," was the verdict. "He's getting old and can't see that the world is beyond wars," agreed the sophisticated. We all believed that the intelligence of the age would never tolerate another war. However, before a year had elapsed Europe was plunged into the World War which had its beginnings in the Balkan States, as Dave had predicted.

The following week I was invited to dine at the home of the editor of *Humanité,* the great daily newspaper of the C.G.T. There I met the wives of several men prominent in political affairs. The greatest difficulty was my own poor French, for few Frenchwomen knew English at all before 1914. Good fortune, however, brought me in touch with an Englishwoman, the wife of a prominent French editor, and to her I clung and talked during my entire visit.

At the editor's home I met that great orator of the radical labor movement, Jean Jaurès, who was destined to be the victim of a cowardly assassin's bullet. He was shot in the back on the very eve of the great European war which he had done his utmost to prevent,—shot and instantly killed on the night of July 31, 1914, while dining with friends in a little restaurant near the Bourse. His assassin, Raoul Villain, was held in prison until March, 1919, when he was acquitted, apparently on the ground that he had acted merely from mis-

guided patriotism. He stated on his arrest that his act was due to the opposition of Jaurès to the three-year military training law. A man of tremendous vitality and vivacity, his eyes aflame with the hope of a new social order, Jean Jaurès privately agreed with me that the working man must limit the size of his family to conform with his earning capacity. Those discussions were serious, earnest, constructive.

It was comforting and encouraging to find so much understanding among the French leaders of thought whom I met. At once they agreed that family limitation was an essential part of labor's freedom. The Syndicalists especially had advocated the practice for many years. That organization had issued leaflets, pamphlets, and books not only on the theory but on the practice and methods of contraception.

The wives of these Frenchmen all took part in these discussions, openly and fearlessly. These women were already liberated from conventional ideas. They left the economics to the men folk; but on questions concerning sex, love, marriage and the fundamental freedom of woman they were fearless and well informed.

The Neo-Malthusian movement, which had been inaugurated by the Drysdales in England, was strongly rooted in French thought. A paper called *Génération Consciente* was published by the French Neo-Malthusians, and a number of well written handbooks on the intimate problems of love and marriage were widely circulated. The French predilection for quality rather than quantity was evidenced in the falling birth rate, though militarists and imperialists were bitter in their denunciations of the movement. The World War and the eventual triumph of militarism were finally to effect a *volte-face,* and the nation which had perhaps done more than any other to teach "conscious procreation" was by the irony of circumstance to give prizes to the parents of large families and later on to enact new and drastic laws against the practice of contraception.

Such was to be the official attitude. But go into the little theatres, the music-halls, read the daily press, and you will

discover that despite these laws the French will never give up their right to decide for themselves in the matter of prudential parenthood.

The cause for alarm in the slowly increasing population of France was not shared by the French people in 1913. This attitude has changed only among the militarists and religious cults so prevalent in France since the World War. As a matter of fact, France has a higher birth rate today (1931) than England, but her death rate, especially her infant mortality, is higher, and consequently her survivals are less. France has stood at the top of the world as a low birth rate country. With that goes culture, art, industry, employment, and a finer independence and development on the part of the working classes.

I remember going to a great labor meeting at the hall of the *Conféderâtion Générale du Travail*. The vast hall was filled with some three thousand French workingmen, all standing, all wearing caps and loose corduroys, which were the badge of the proletariat. As we were going to that meeting we crossed the bridge to get to the hall. The police were stopping all who crossed the bridge, demanding an account of where they were going. They feared a riot. We went with Victor Dave. His picturesque white hair was surmounted by a silk hat. This badge of respectability was the passport which got us over the bridge.

The meeting was revolutionary in spirit. Social unrest was in the air. All the speakers urged the importance of the international brotherhood and solidarity of the working classes. All were opposed to war. They urged their fellow workers not to take up arms against the workers of other nations. They opposed vigorously the efforts of the French government to arouse national hatreds through patriotic sentiments.

It seemed to me as if war was an impossibility. Yet, when we made our way out of the crowded, smoky hall into the narrow, alley-like street into the Paris night, we found every exit into the boulevards guarded by hundreds of gendarmes, both mounted and afoot. It was bewildering to me. It was

a foreboding of the catastrophic fears. I found myself puzzling over the problems of European politics and wondering what the future was to bring forth.

This was my first experience in feeling that foreigners in Paris were being watched by the police, that our every movement was under surveillance. The unease that this feeling produced was more than sharpened a few days later. The incident is worth recounting.

Among the letters of introduction was one given to me by Edward Mylius, who had been arrested in London for criminal libel, the complainant being none other than George V, King of England. Mylius, a young social rebel, had circulated a pamphlet written by Edward Holton James, nephew of William and Henry James, now an adherent of Gandhi, declaring that the King of England had once contracted a morganatic marriage. The case had attracted international comment. After his conviction and jail sentence Mylius had come to New York, where I had met him.

He gave me a letter of introduction to the Hindu nationalist, Shyamaji Krishnavarma, then living in Paris. This Indian patriot and scholar was the leader of his countrymen who were conducting an underground battle for the independence of India. His movements were carefully noted from the Prefecture of Police, evidently working in cooperation with the British Secret Service.

I found out to my amazement that the concierges in every house in Paris were *ex officio* agents of the Prefecture of Police and were compelled to make regular reports on the activity, no matter how petty, of the tenants of the houses they cared for. These reports were incorporated, so we were told into the *dossier,* or notebook, kept by the police.

I sent the letter to Krishnavarma. The next day the distinguished Hindu came to call on me. He asked if he could give a reception in my honor the following week. I was more than flattered by this compliment. I assented readily. An afternoon was set for the following week. At the appointed

hour, with my friend Jessie Ashley, I was ushered into the spacious, luxurious salon of Krishnavarma.

He was a man in his late forties, a scholar, a philosopher who derived his social and political ideas from the Spencerian doctrines which most of us considered quite old-fogyish and outworn. He was the editor of an organ called the *Indian Sociologist,* printed in the English language by French printers and surreptitiously carried across the Channel and circulated in Great Britain among the Indian Home Rulers.

Nearly twenty-five men were present, Indians all, and but one woman besides ourselves—the wife of our host. She sat abjectly silent throughout the whole discussion of social and economic problems. The colloquy was exciting. In the course of our discussion Mr. Krishnavarma gave his wife a curt command. She arose swiftly, went into the library, and returned with a well-thumbed and pencil-marked copy of his pet philosopher, Herbert Spencer.

I was shocked by the slave-like attitude of the wife. It came to me in a flash that here was a man's salon in the heart of Paris. Though he was battling for the independence of India, Krishnavarma, it was evident, had no toleration for the independence of women. He seemed to consider his wife as neither an independent being nor an equal but fundamentally as a slave to his wishes. After we left, Jessie Ashley and I, both avowed Feminists, commented on the wife's subservience and the fact that no other women were present.

I had not been in the apartment in the Boulevard St. Michel for half an hour when my daughter Peggy, aged three, ran excitedly into the bedroom where I was dressing, crying: "There are three gendarmes at the door!" The children loved the word gendarmes, and talked about them often. I went out to meet them. They demanded to know who lived in the apartment; where we had come from; the object of our visit to France; how long we intended to stay in Paris; how we had found the apartment; from whom we had rented it; and where I had been that afternoon. The questions came faster

and faster. How long had I known Krishnavarma? What were we doing at his home?

Our landlady, I learned later, had failed to send our names to the prefecture. This was the apparent reason for the official call, but in reality it was a check-up on every one who visited the house of the Indian conspirator.

For the rest of our sojourn in Paris our actions were known to the police.

I was struck with the motherly attention our *femme de chambre* gave her one and only child. She came regularly to work at the apartment, but no words could persuade her to come before Jean had been taken to his school, and nothing could prevent her leaving her work promptly at noon to go to fetch him from school for his luncheon. Such considerate care was respected by us all. I compared this attitude of the French mother of one child who, though compelled to work, gave the child her attention and care, with those drunken, slovenly mothers of ten children in Glasgow who dragged their young children through the streets at midnight begging for bread. I began to see the small family as a part of social evolution.

Bill Haywood was then in Paris. Together we visited the working-class districts and several homes where conditions were so favorable we could only credit them to the system of small families which was so prevalent all over France. I went into shops and book-stalls and purchased all the devices on contraception obtainable. I talked to doctors and midwives and druggists, to working men and women, to rich and poor. I gathered together all available information and began to weed out the useless and to select the most suitable methods for home consumption.

In France the word "proletariat" was interpreted as meaning "producers of children." The right to knowledge of contraceptive technique was almost a national right. Even the Catholic Church could not deter its practice. The individuality of the Frenchman and his ideas of individual rights made it hard for him to understand *why* or *how* any American could

stand for laws interfering with the practice of contraception, which is so strictly the affair of the individual. Alas that the same legal restrictions apply in France today! In France information had been generally disseminated from mother to daughter for generations, since the Code Napoleon. The peasant mothers prided themselves on their special recipé for suppositories. Soap douches were popular aids to hygiene, and every married woman knew all there was to know about contraception as well as the art of love.

The weakness of the movement there was that it had no direction. It was entirely an individual affair. Methods learned from any sources were practiced. Doctors did not teach contraception, but they attended to the failures. Druggists advised as to the best methods; consequently there were too many failures, and abortions resulted.

I was not pleased with the findings of my studies in Paris. I wanted something more definite. I longed to see so powerful a force properly directed and controlled. But the Frenchman shrugged his shoulders and laughed, doubtless glad he was in France and not in America.

My stay in France was brief. After I had obtained the facts I had come for I was restless and unhappy and wanted to be off. The brooding spirit was upon me and would not give me peace.

At this time the women of England were fighting valiantly for their political freedom, and telegrams and letters came beseeching me to go over to London to enter the fight with Mrs. Pankhurst. I had long been an ardent admirer of her courage and generalship. To enter the battle of "Votes for Women" at times seemed a stern duty; now that I was so near the battle front the duty became almost an obligation.

Another temptation came from Freiburg, Germany, where two American women had gone to look into the new miracle of Twilight Sleep. I was urged to come over to study the method and to help them spread this great truth into the highways and byways of America.

Anything which would relieve women of the pangs of

childbirth was indeed a godsend, and offered a great mission. But it was not enough. To secure for women the right to vote and to be acknowledged as equals in a civilized community was truly a great and noble task, but it was not enough. Both of these causes were necessary to our civilization and needed champions to espouse them, but to me neither of them went as deep in social evolution nor were so necessary to woman's progress as the right to control her own generative functions and the right to obtain knowledge for this purpose. Neither of the tempting missions went deep enough to satisfy my prevailing desire to eradicate from the social system the negative attitude toward women and the exclusion of her fundamental right.

Thus I turned away from the two most tempting and interesting activities of that year and continued the brewing, mulling, brooding attitude in my endeavor to solve the complex problems of woman's freedom. The whole of life was like a picture puzzle, and think as I would I could not put it together.

A whole year had been given over to this inactive, incoherent, inarticulate brooding. Family and friends were generous in gentleness and patience. My mind was as though focused on a distant dream, and consecration, concentration, visualization finally brought it into form. The plan of action began to take shape; light began to come through. The artist husband was to be ensconced in his studio to continue his work in Paris, while I was to return home to America with the children and stir up a national campaign.

While I had been engrossed with the problems of family limitation, my artist husband was revelling in the pleasure of meeting the men he considered the great artists of the period. He came home aglow with the news of meeting Henri-Matisse, in those days not yet emerged from obscurity. We had met the great Monet, and other impressionists of the period.

My burning desire was not satisfied with listening to these dreams of beauty, of structure, of form. I knew that women

were dying, suffering, in agony, in my own country. I felt that I had the knowledge that they needed. I wanted to get back and shout it out to them from the housetops.

The three children and I left Paris on the thirty-first of December, embarking at Cherbourg on the S. S. *New York*. William Sanger remained in Paris to continue his absorbed study of art. Little did any of us realize as we parted at the Gare Saint-Lazare that chilly winter day that our little family was never to be reunited. We never dreamed that circumstances over which we had no control were to widen the paths between William Sanger and myself. Yet sometimes in life the ideals which take possession of the mind become more imperious, more predominant than personal feelings. Such was the case in the relationship between William Sanger and myself.

Three children in Europe is a curiosity, but on board a steamer their seasick ailments arouse a certain sympathy from all passengers and stewards alike. When one of the deck stewards asked if I had a nurse or maid to help me attend them I said "No," that it was no trouble.

He replied with grave concern: "Well, Madam, it's the likes of you that has in 'em the makings of a real 'ero."

V

THE WOMAN REBEL

IN THOSE years just before the war a new religion was spreading over our country. It had no definite name, and its adherents would have been the first vociferously to deny that they were religious. This new faith was made up of scoffers, rebels, revolutionists, anarchists, socialists of all shades, from the "pink tea" intellectual to the dark purple lawbreaker. The term "radical" was used to cover them all. But while all were freethinkers, agnostics or atheists, they were as fanatical in their faith in the coming revolution as ever any primitive Christian was for the immediate establishment of the Kingdom of God.

Faith is infectious, and radicalism in the decade preceding the declaration of war in August 1914 made a tremendous appeal to the young, to idealists, to all who were brought face to face with the tragedies of modern society and who were totally disillusioned by the blight of conservative reaction then entrenched in power. Gross injustices were to be witnessed on all sides. The doctrines of Syndicalism, of Sabotage, of

Ca' Canny and Direct Action were discussed and advocated. These revolutionaries sneered at Political Actionists; Direct Actionists distrusted opportunists.

Almost without realizing it, you became a "comrade" or "fellow worker"; like the primitive Christian, a member of a secret order. The martyr, it has been well said, creates the faith. Well, there were martyrs aplenty in those days—men and women who had served sentences in prison for their beliefs and who were honored accordingly. One had hardly any social standing at all in radical circles unless one had "worked for wages," or brushed up against the police, or had served at least a few days in jail. As in the early Church, most of the members of this order were of the working classes, though there were eccentric millionaires, editors, lawyers, and rich women who had experienced "conversion" and were active in the "movement." Some could even predict the exact date of the coming Revolution.

This movement ranged, as I say, from light pink to dark purple. At one end of the scale there were lawbreakers, the Direct-Actionists, the strike leaders, Syndicalists and Industrial Workers of the World, familiarly known as "Wobblies"; at the other end the Marxian Socialists and Trade Unionists. Between the two there was a chasm that was never to be closed. Radicals reviled the orthodox Socialists even more than they did the Capitalists and the *bourgeois,* this last term being the greatest insult that could be hurled at a "comrade" with whom one disagreed.

After Francisco Ferrer, the Spanish libertarian, had been executed and thrown in a ditch at Montjuich, at the instigation of the Roman Catholic Church in Spain, a tremendous wave of indignation swept over the civilized world. A little group of New York radicals sought to honor his name and perpetuate his memory by the establishment of a "Modern School" on East Twelfth Street. Leonard Abbott, Hutchins Hapgood, Bayard Boyeson and others were the leading spirits in this enterprise. Many who have since become famous taught and lectured there. Manuel Komroff, now acclaimed as a novelist,

was for a time associated in the direction of the Ferrer school. Lola Ridge, a fiery, intense rebel from Australia, who has since won renown as a poetess, was its secretary. Robert Henri and George Bellows lectured and taught art there. Alexander Brook and Man Ray, now in Paris, were students. And for the children, after many changes, a young man named Will Durant was chosen as instructor. Will Durant, a recent convert from Catholicism, his young head bursting with his recent liberation, and yet withal so innocent of life, created quite a problem for the directors of the "Modern School" by more or less promptly falling in love with one of his pupils, a young girl not out of the roller-skate period! Indeed, I can remember "Puck" Durant, even after their early and quite successful marriage, coming to my house to spend the day and spending the greater part of it out playing marbles with my son Stuart.

It is not hard to laugh about it all now, but no one could have been more serious and determined than we were in those days.

When the Lawrence, Massachusetts, strike broke out in 1912, the Syndicalists tossed me into their ranks of action. The Italian leaders in New York City planned to invite the children of the strikers to visit the workers' homes of other cities. Help was needed for the job of transferring them, and I was requested to go to Lawrence to assist in bringing the 250 children to their foster parents in New York. I did this with enthusiasm, and made an examination of the children's throats and chests before putting them aboard to avoid the possible spread of contagion. Four or five children were remanded. I was again appalled at the faces of these mothers. As they parted with the children, they had the same secret dread, the worried countenance, the age-wrinkled skin of sixty on faces less than thirty.

Never shall I forget that night when we arrived at the Grand Central Station. The train was late. Thousands of men and women workers and liberals had waited for that train to come in. When we descended from the train to the platform we must have presented a picture like the Pied Piper

followed by the children of Hamelin. As soon as we were recognized by some of the leaders, there was a grand rush, a pushing aside of policemen, and jumping over the ropes to the platform. Each man as he came snatched the first child up in his arms, hoisted it upon his shoulders, and with torches, banners, songs, we marched to the notes of the music, every child under the age of twelve hoisted on the shoulders of one of the marchers.

Thus, in the evening of that cold March day, we marched a thousand strong from Grand Central Station to a public hall near Union Square, where a hot supper awaited the visitors; and foster parents loitered about waiting for the child or children whom they were temporarily to adopt until the strikers were back at work again.

I went home more puzzled than ever over the social problem, and searching, still searching for the solution. For in the great industrial strikes, urged by the Industrial Workers of the World and the revolutionary Socialists, I saw that the greatest suffering fell upon the women and children. They were the starved, the shivering, during those long days and nights when the agitators were busy urging the factory workers to hold out against their employers. And in not a few cases these starving women were not only forced to hear the pitiful whining of the children for something to eat, but within their frail and enfeebled bodies an unborn child was making ever-increasing demands upon an under-nourished system.

It was at this time I began to realize that Anthony Comstock was alive and active. His stunted, neurotic nature and savage methods of attack had ruined thousands of women's lives. He had indirectly caused the death of untold thousands. He and a weak-kneed Congress, which, through a trick, in 1873 had given him the power of an autocrat, were directly responsible for the deplorable condition of a whole generation of women left physically damaged and spiritually crippled from the results of abortion. No group of women had yet locked horns with this public enemy. Women in far western states who had fought for the sacred privilege of the ballot and *won*

it years earlier had never raised their voices against the Comstock laws. Their own shallow emotions had not grappled with so fundamental a need as sex.

Now upon my return from Paris I came at last to the realization that I must fight the battle against Comstock's obscenity laws utterly alone. No organization would support me. No group of women would stand beside me in this fight. On all sides, in fact, I was advised to let it alone or suffer the consequences. I decided to test out public opinion on the broad issues of economic and feministic principles.

I took what money I was able to subtract from my rapidly decreasing bank account and started the first lap of my work by the publication of a monthly magazine, *The Woman Rebel.*

Its message was a scathing denunciation of all organized conventionalities. It went as far as was necessary to arouse the Comstockians to bite. While the main reason for its publication was to feel out the authorities on the Federal law, it had another purpose, namely, that of gathering friends and supporters to this cause. It championed freedom of speech and press and lived up to its principles.

I have no apologies for the publication of *The Woman Rebel.* It expressed exactly what I felt and thought at that time. Some recent critics claim that it went too far afield and lent itself to theories beside the question of contraception, all of which is true, but this only strengthened its substance, nevertheless, and widened its appeal.

The entire burden of putting out *The Woman Rebel* was upon my individual shoulders. I was editor, manager, circulation manager, bookkeeper. I was solely responsible for it financially, legally, and morally. I paid the printer's bills and worked day and night at making it as red and flaming as possible. Max Eastman of *The Masses* was doubtless correct in saying of its first issue: "We must thank Margaret Sanger for speaking out clearly and quietly for popular education in the means of preventing conception. And if she goes to court in this fight, we must go too and stand behind her

and make her martyrdom—if martyrdom it must be—the means of that very publicity she is fighting to win. There is no more important stand, and no stand that requires more bravery and purity of heart, than this one she is making. And if the virtue that holds heroes up to these sticking points must be united with the fault of rather unconvincing excitedness and intolerance—all right, we will hail the virtue and call it a bargain at the price."

The response to its call was immediate. Requests for information came from labor unions, friends of labor, radicals, dissatisfied men and women all over the United States. The majority of labor papers carried news of *The Woman Rebel,* and within six months I had received over 10,000 requests for contraceptive information.

One morning after the children were washed and dressed and sent away to their school in the neighborhood I started my day's work by looking over my huge batch of mail. My attention was immediately caught by an unstamped envelope from the New York Post Office. I tore it open. "Dear Madam," I read: "You are hereby notified that the Solicitor of the Post Office Department has decided that *The Woman Rebel* for March 1914 is unmailable under Section 489, Postal Laws and Regulations." It was signed by E. M. Morgan, Postmaster.

I re-read the letter. At first the significance of its contents did not register on my brain. I read it again, and yet again; and then I *knew* the fight was on!

This very morning, May —, 1931, as I write these words, I have before me a statement, published on the front page of the *New York Times,* issued by the Committee on Marriage and the Home of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America supporting birth control from the point of view of morality and pleading for it to promote the health of women and family happiness in the home. The article on "Prevention of Conception" in that March issue of *The Woman Rebel* was the first outspoken challenge on a subject which was to change the thought of a generation.

I have often been asked by new friends how I felt when that letter from the New York postmaster informed me that *The Woman Rebel* was unmailable, that if I went on with its publication I might be convicted of a crime and sentenced to a long term in prison. "Why," they ask, "didn't you stop right there?" My reply is that I had already visualized, or foreseen, with what I can only call long range vision the long series of obstacles, legal and financial, I was to encounter. I had sensed with amazing accuracy the denunciation, misunderstanding, accusation and ostracism which was to follow. I was prepared for anything. Nothing could come as a surprise. For, remember, even before the first issue of the paper was prepared my closest friends had used all their influence to dissuade me from starting it. Every argument, every weapon to discourage me had been met by my passionate retort that the issue was: "Millions of mothers' lives against the comfort and security of one." Now again I had come face to face with another weapon, not the advice of friends or relatives, but with the power of a great nation—the law.

After the first emotions of surprise had cooled down, I began to read the letter with what I often call "my head sense," and then realized that the letter was vague and ambiguous and in no way helpful to me in getting at the facts of its suppression. There was no mention of any special article or articles which had caused the paper to be banned. Surely all the articles in that little eight-page "sass box" could not be considered obscene!

I therefore took up my pen and replied courteously to the letter. I asked Mr. Morgan to help me by stating definitely what had offended him, thereby assisting me in my conduct in the future. The reply which followed simply repeated the statement in his former letter, namely, that the March issue was unmailable. Again, when the news of the post office action spread in the press, my friends came and begged me to cease such absurd activity, and cautioned that I could "never get away" with this kind of thing.

"For heaven's sake, go back and take care of your children!" said one noted woman rebel.

To me, having visualized these and many other obstacles, this was only the first open fire, and it was not in my nature to run back while a principle was involved. I felt that a right was on my side, and *always I had believed* that principles eventually win out if you hold fast to them.

I was to be shaken like a sapling in the wind before many weeks later, in this belief.

There followed several months of the most trying ordeal any woman could experience in a country said to be for the brave and the free. For weeks I was followed about by detectives. My every move was spied and reported upon. I had to act quickly and make quick decisions in order to accomplish what I had set out to do.

The first thing necessary was to get a name for contraception which would convey to the public the social and personal significance of the idea. A few friends and supporters of the paper gathered together one evening in my apartment to discuss the selection of a distinctive name. We debated in turn: "Malthusianism," "conscious generation," "voluntary parenthood," "voluntary motherhood," "preventception," "the new motherhood," "constructive generation," etc., etc.

All of these names were cast aside as not meeting the demands. Then we got a little nearer when "family control" and "race control" and "birth-rate control" were suggested.

Finally it came to me out of the blue—"Birth Control!"

We all knew at once that we had found the perfect name for the cause. There was no further discussion. Our object was attained. The group disbanded to meet no more.

That was the first time the words were used together. The phrase has now gone round the world like a magic message to herald the coming of a new dawn. It has become part of the English language and is embodied in the encyclopedia as well as in practically every modern book on sociology. It is discussed in newspapers all over the world, in colleges, religious conventions, and medical and philosophical institutes,—

everywhere. "Birth control," as conceived and defined, is "the conscious control of the birth rate by means that prevent the conception of human life."

With this definition and name the discussion of birth control dominated all others then current in *The Woman Rebel.* The postal authorities ignored practically all theoretical attacks on the government. The articles on politics and economics were not deemed indictable, but any mention of birth control or its ramifications was promptly suppressed and indictments issued. It was the challenge of a free press. How much would the postal authorities suppress? What were they really after? What kind of articles did they consider obscene? No one knew. The postmaster would not definitely reveal his objections.

But the fight was on, and all classes of people threw themselves into it: laborers, radicals, liberals, anarchists, semi-revolutionaries, industrialists, and hundreds of others who were neither in nor out of the so-called radical movement. People of whom no one had ever heard turned up to offer advice or bring articles on every possible subject. They challenged, defied me to publish them in the name of free speech! It got to be something of a riot, but a lark nevertheless. I accepted all challenges and printed everything.

During all these months while *The Woman Rebel* was doing the window dressing for me—attracting attention and creating public discussion—I was hard at work writing a little practical pamphlet called "Family Limitation." Within its covers was contained all the practical advice I could give, including the names and descriptions of the devices used for contraception which I had obtained in France. It was simply and plainly written, and was dedicated to the wives of workingmen. With this pamphlet I intended to overcome all Puritanical objections to birth control. I naïvely believed that the Suffragists and Feminists, when they read its simple directions and its clean and wholesome advice, would join in this crusade and challenge the absurdity of such clean ideas being classified

as obscene. I was to undergo many disappointments in the next few years.

I wrote the pamphlet under great pressure. It was as if a psychological whip lashed me into a prison of my own making. There was no rest, no contentment in my heart until every word had been set down in its proper place; but when it was finally finished a great peace entered my soul.

The story of getting that little pamphlet printed has never been written, and even now it cannot be entirely divulged. To me it was such a plain, simple, and modest little treatise that I could not credit it with the power it seemed to have of upsetting so many people. I took the manuscript to a printer well known for his liberal tendencies and courage. He read the contents page by page, turned deadly pale, and said: "That can never be printed, Margaret. It's a Sing Sing job."

I looked him straight in the eye and said: "Well, what about it?"

That question doubled him up. He stuttered something about having a family, and I replied that I had one too. It was pathetic to see him struggling with his conscience, his ideals, his desire, and his common sense. Finally, after being goaded into shame and fury, he said that he did not believe in the damn thing and would not print it for a thousand dollars.

I visited at least twenty printers within the next two weeks. No one would touch the job. It seemed impossible ever to get into print the contents of that pamphlet.

It is a marvellous sensation, however, to have a period of apparent fanaticism. No obstacle can discourage you. The single vision of your quest obscures defeat and lifts you over mountainous difficulties. Never would I give up looking for a printer. I realized, however, that it was hopeless to think of having it done by the regular trade. I had to win the sympathy of some one individual who would do the initial work, and trust the gods to do the rest. I am not at liberty to tell who did the work. The man is now a prominent leader in politics in another country. Blessings on his head! He did

the linotype work after hours when his shop was supposed to be closed so that there would be no workers about to see him at his risky job. After that, there was still the question of printing, binding, and storing, all of which was accomplished by individuals of five nationalities over a period of three months despite the careful watching of Uncle Sam.

When the edition of 100,000 was finally printed and carefully wrapped, addressed, sealed and transported to storage in three cities ready for future circulation, I knew that the battle was half won. I was now ready for action and its consequences.

My desire had been to print a million copies of the family limitation pamphlet. These were to be divided conveniently for storage in several large cities or industrial centers. At a signal from me they were to be released, and all who had requested copies were to receive them at the same time. It was a cherished plan of mine. The quantity had to be reduced, owing to lack of funds, but the arrangement and distribution was now under way. Workers in Chicago, Pittsburgh and San Francisco helped to carry the plan through. Within a specified time 100,000 pamphlets would be finding their way into the homes of working men and women in every state in the Union.

The March, May, July, and August issues of *The Woman Rebel* had been suppressed by the postmaster. Repeatedly in reply to the formal notice I inquired specifically which article or articles had incurred Uncle Sam's austere disapproval, but never could I obtain that definite information. The whole issue was always suppressed, and apparently that was all there was to that. I refused to accept such wholesale disregard for liberty of the press; and night after night, often until the early hours of the morning, with one or more co-workers I wended my way from the printers to the general post office and dropped the magazine, piece by piece, into the various letter boxes and chutes.

The threat of a prison sentence hovered over me constantly. I was not afraid to go to jail for an ideal, but jail was not my

goal. I had seen braver and hardier souls than I broken in spirit and body by prison terms, and I had no more intention of submitting tamely to prison life than I had had eight years earlier of submitting to a protracted illness. It was one thing to go to jail because of your principles, but it was a far more satisfactory feeling to know you had accomplished your purpose in getting there. I wanted the satisfaction of thinking and knowing that knowledge of contraception was at last in the open, spreading its way into the homes of working men and women where I knew it would be received with gratitude.

Later, when indictments had been issued, I found out which articles had been the cause of suppression. In the March issue, it was an article called "The Prevention of Conception." The suppressed May issue contained three articles: "Open Discussion," "Abortion in the United States," and "Can You Afford to Have a Large Family?" The July issue announced the formation of the first birth control league in America. This announcement, together with two other articles, was the cause of Uncle Sam's disapproval, although at the time I could not find out just what subject or just which articles were considered unmailable, and I was determined to prod and goad the postmaster until some definite knowledge was obtained as to *what* obscenity is. Five issues had been denied admission to the United States mails and no reason given—nothing to go by. How could any editor be expected to guard against suppression when no explanation of the offending articles was given? So far there had been no information on contraception in *The Woman Rebel.*

My plan was to set free from my prison cell the pamphlet "Family Limitation" then in storage to those thousands of mothers all over the country requesting them, and thereby to awaken the womanhood of America to the simple decency of the contents of the pamphlet. If my own country had only iron bars for those who tried to spread enlightenment and knowledge to the masses, then I should have to accept that decision, but I was determined not to spend years or even months in jail without a battle for the privilege of discussing

the right to change a law. It was agreed that were I sent to prison the doors of the storehouse would be opened and the pamphlets containing all the practical information on contraception would be released as an answer and a protest. Men and women workers all over the country were ready and willing to cooperate. Organized labor officials in West Virginia mines, New England woollen mills, New Jersey silk mills, Montana copper mines, all unofficially offered to spread the pamphlets at a word's notice.

However, before I could complete this gigantic plan of distributing the pamphlets, I was interrupted one afternoon in August by the call of two men representing his majesty, Uncle Sam. They said that I had been indicted by the grand jury for articles in *The Woman Rebel.*

"But," I protested, "there is no information on contraception in the pages of *The Woman Rebel.*"

"It's against the laws," they proclaimed. "You had better submit quietly."

I assured them that I would do nothing of the kind, that I intended making noise enough to resound from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. They then sat down and questioned me as to my motives. They were, I am glad to say, intelligent officials of the federal government, capable of assimilating new ideas. I set the case before them and told them exactly what I believed birth control could do. I think they were disarmed by the simplicity of my motives, and I think that they believed me. When I went to court at the appointed time, as agreed upon, I felt that they had said a good word in my behalf. Judge Hazel, a kindly, fatherly man of Southern origin, allowed me to go on my own recognizance, and the case was adjourned until the end of October.

This seemed to be sufficient time for me to prepare a proper defense, and I at once set about planning for the future care of my children in case I should be sentenced to prison.

VI

INDICTED

IT HAD been many years since I had seen my picturesque and interesting father. He never indulged in correspondence unless he had something important to say. Notice of *The Woman Rebel's* suppression had reached my childhood home in western New York. A family council was called as in the past. A verdict of "nervous breakdown" was generously decreed, but back in the minds of all was the conviction that I had suddenly lost my reason. Father was according dispatched to New York for his first visit in more than forty years. It was his intention to make every effort to mollify me, and gradually to get me off to a private sanitarium where I was to be kept until I had recovered from such wild impulses. Contrary to all his expectations he found me in better health than when he had last seen me. He was amazed at the clearly visioned plans I had laid, at my poise, determination, and unexcited ability to carry on. For several days we argued over the contents of *The Woman Rebel.*

Father hated it all. He despised talk about revolution, he

despaired of any one who could talk so openly about sex. Even after he was convinced that I had not gone out of my mind he did his best to dissuade me from such radical ways.

He was at home with me when the arrest took place. I had gone to open the door when the bell rang, and had ushered the two federal officers into my office, which served also as dining room. Father sat off in the adjoining room, apparently unconcerned, reading his paper. The conversation took place forgetful of his presence. When the officers left the apartment after a three hours' cross examination Father came through the wide open doors with arms outstretched. He embraced me and drew me close to him with tears in his eyes, and his voice trembled. "Daughter," he said, "you are a brave, clean-fighting warrior. You will win this case. Everything is with you—reason, common sense, and progress. From now on I'm on your side. I never saw the truth until today." Old fashioned phraseology I thought, but I felt happy to have convinced my father of the justice of my stand, and confident that a jury would likewise be convinced.

Two of my children, Grant and Peggy, were at this time visiting friends at Woodstock in the Catskills. The older boy, Stuart, was in a camp in Maine. I had now to prepare for my possible conviction and almost inevitable incarceration for a period of years—how long, I could not tell. These plans occupied most of my time for the next few weeks. Having been assured by the district attorney that there would be plenty of time to prepare my case, I devoted my energies to my children's future. I arranged to send one to a small school on Long Island and to keep the younger two together with a friend and my sister at home. It was the opinion of nearly all my friends that I would have to spend at least a year in one of the federal penitentiaries.

One kind woman, whom I had never seen before, called late one evening and volunteered to give me dancing lessons. She had thought out the kind most suitable for a prison cell, and had written careful directions so that proper exercise could be combined with the rhythm of the dance.

A few weeks later I was suddenly called to the telephone one day to learn that my case had been called that morning and that I had been rebuked by the officer because I had not been present. I had received no notice from the district attorney of any kind. I was not particularly disturbed, however, believing it was but part of the regular court procedure. When I arrived in the courtroom the next morning I felt a great change in the attitude of both the judge and the district attorney since the case was called two weeks previously.

I had not engaged an attorney, and the judge advised me to get one. I told him that I wanted time to prepare my case, and asked for one month's postponement of the trial. The district attorney flatly refused to allow this time, and stated that I had been given sufficient time to prepare it and that the case must go on that afternoon.

I was so amazed at this changed attitude that I could only believe that this refusal was due to my lack of technical language of the court; so I decided to ask one of the attorneys I knew to come round in the afternoon and make the request over again. Simon H. Pollock, an attorney well known in labor circles, agreed with me that a lawyer's plea would not be refused. He put in a request for a month's stay. It was refused. He reduced it to two weeks. Again it was refused. The court's final decision was that at ten o'clock the following morning the case of the United States Government against Margaret Sanger was to go on without fail. Crestfallen, the lawyer and I left the room together. He could not believe his ears, nor could I mine. It was now about four o'clock in the afternoon and I had to think and act quickly.

Something had happened to change the kindly, lenient manner of the judge. The district attorney had become rabid and incensed and seemingly determined that I should be punished. What it was I half surmised. The World War was then rocking the foundations of Europe, and interest in Germany's advance upon Paris was occupying the strained attention of every mind in America. All other news sank into insignificance and, if mentioned at all, was pushed aside where it was

scarcely noticed. It was the ideal time for a government to get any nuisance like a birth control case out of the way. There was no doubt in my mind that, if I went into that hostile courtroom the following morning unprepared, I would be convicted of publishing an obscene paper and sentenced to at least one year in the penitentiary—perhaps five years. I knew further that such a conviction would be an injustice. But it was necessary, if I was to convince a jury of this, to have my facts well marshalled, and that could not be done in so short a time.

I was not afraid of the penitentiary. I was not afraid of anything except being misunderstood. That I dreaded. I did not want to go to jail for "obscenity," but I had no hesitation to go for a principle or as a challenge to the obscenity laws, providing my case could be properly heard.

The war had driven Americans back from Europe, and my artist husband was uprooted from his studio in Paris and had just arrived in New York. During the period since we had parted in Paris we had remained loyal friends, but we both shared in the realization that it would never again be possible for us to resume a quiet, mediocre, married life. From the deep waters into which I had been swept by the current of events it was impossible to return to the shallow pool of domesticity. Yet while we were separated in fact, we still had the interest of our children to consider.

What was I to do! Should I get another lawyer, one with personal influence who could get a few weeks' postponement, and should we go into court together and fight it out? I knew of no such lawyer, and besides I had no money for such a luxury. Should I do as some "I-told-you-sos" suggested—"go to court and take your medicine?" Yes, but what medicine? I did not want a dosage for the wrong disease.

Then there was the question of the children's welfare and that dreaded spectre of my separation from them. Could I leave them the heritage of a mother who went to jail for some offensive, obscene literature of which no one knew the details? It would be whispered about from place to place and the real facts never known. This was the situation I deplored, and I

resolved that anything would be better than allowing it to happen.

I made up my mind that if I was to have a decent defense prepared the only thing I could do was to set sail for Europe, prepare my case adequately, stay until the war was over, and return then to fight it out in the courts. By the time I had come to this decision it was already late in the evening.

The train for Montreal would leave within a few hours. Could I make it? Should I make it? Could I ever make the friends who had advised against this work and these activities understand? Could I ever make *anyone* understand? Had I a right to leave the children without seeing them just once more? Peggy's leg was swollen from vaccination, and this kept worrying me; it almost upset my life.

The hours of that memorable night of doubt could well be called a spiritual crucifixion. The torture of indecision—the agony of deciding one way and then reversing the decision—how those minutes flew! I sat perfectly still, my watch on the table, in a hotel room I had taken to be absolutely alone with my thoughts before I took the final plunge. It grew later and later. I knew there was no turning back once I boarded that train. I wanted no one to influence my decision one way or the other. It was like birth and death—that journey had to be taken alone. Gradually, conviction came. About half an hour before train time I knew that I *must* go. I wrote two letters, one to the judge and one to the district attorney. I informed them both that I would not be at court at ten o'clock the following day, and reminded them that I had asked for a reasonable time to prepare my case, which was far more social than individual, and it had been denied. I had asked for a month's postponement, and their refusal had compelled me to take a year!

A friend or two who had been faithful and helpful throughout this struggle came to see me safely on the train. I left New York at midnight, leaving behind me all that I held dear in life to become a fugitive from justice and an exile.

The following letter was later addressed to my personal friends and the 2,000 subscribers of *The Woman Rebel:*

En Route to Exile
October, 1914

Comrades and Friends,—

Every paper published should have a message for its readers. It should deliver it and be done. *The Woman Rebel* had for its aim the imparting of information for the prevention of conception. (None of the suppressed issues contained such information.) It was not the intention to labor for years advocating the idea, but to give the information directly to those who desired it. The March, May, July, August, September and October issues have been suppressed and confiscated by the Post Office. They have been mailed regularly to all subscribers. If you have not received your copies, it has been because the U. S. Post Office has refused to carry them on to you.

My work in the nursing field for the past fourteen years has convinced me that the workers desire the knowledge of prevention of conception. My work among women of the working class proved to me sufficiently that it is they who are suffering because of the law which forbids the imparting of the information. To wait for this law to be repealed would be years and years hence. Thousands of unwanted children may be brought into the world in the meantime, thousands of women made miserable and unhappy.

Why should we wait?

Shall we who have heard the cries and seen the agony of dying women respect the law which has caused their deaths?

Shall we watch in patience the murdering of 25,000 women each year in the United States from criminal abortions?

Shall we fold our hands and wait until a body of sleek

and well fed politicians get ready to abolish the cause of such slaughter?

Shall we look upon a piece of parchment as greater than human happiness, greater than human life?

Shall we let it destroy our womanhood, or hold millions of workers in bondage and slavery? Shall we who respond to the throbbing pulse of human needs concern ourselves with indictments, courts, and judges, or shall we do our work first and settle with these evils after?

This law has caused the perpetuation of quackery. It has created the fake and quack who benefit by its existence.

Jail has not been my goal. There is special work to be done and I shall do it first. If jail comes after, I shall call upon all to assist me. In the meantime, I shall attempt to nullify the law by direct action and attend to the consequences afterward.

Over 100,000 working men and women in the United States shall hear from me.

The Boston Tea Party was a defiant and revolutionary act in the eyes of the British Government, but to the American Revolutionist it was but an act of courage and justice.

Yours fraternally,
Margaret Sanger.

VII

EXILE

THE train sped on bearing one sleepless passenger whose heart had been torn into shreds by emotion and suspense. My head reeled and ached, but I could not sleep. Over and over again a number of questions raced through my brain: Where was I going? What was I to do? What *was* I to do? Would I have money enough to carry me through? And then what? Where was I to go in England? Whom was I to see? What was I to do then? All of these perplexing questions arose again and again far into the early hours of the morning.

A few days in Toronto, a few more in Montreal, my passage booked, and I was sailing to a war-racked Europe with a new name and without a passport. My case was extraditable, as I was indicted on a felonious charge, and I could be brought back if my whereabouts was known. Wisdom being the better part of valor, it had seemed best to drop the name of Sanger for the time being, but I had not foreseen the difficulties awaiting me and the complications which might ensue.

"England is at war, madam," said the government official

who was inspecting the passports at Liverpool. "You can't expect us to let you through. We are sending people back for passports every day, and I can't admit you."

That seemed to be the final decision. I inquired to whom I should appeal who would have authority to admit me. I can never reveal what happened, but after an hour's conversation with two men "higher up" (keen observers of human nature), I was finally allowed to enter England without a passport.

If any of my readers know the city of Liverpool, I trust they have been spared knowing it during the months of November and December. God, what cold! Piercing chills penetrated to the marrow of my bones. The houses, the rooms, the beds were cold with a death-like chill. I had to wait in Liverpool for letters and messages from home and it seemed ages before they came. I was homesick for the children, lonely for friends as I had never been in my life, before or since.

One figure stands out in my memory of Liverpool—Lorenzo Portet, the companion and successor of Francisco Ferrer. Portet was then teaching Spanish in the University of Liverpool, and through him I was able to get in touch with many people. I followed up various leads given me by that noble and courageous man.

Lorenzo Portet was a rare individual. He was an unusually brilliant companion, a loyal, inspiring friend. He was one of those rare intuitive men who sense what you are trying to do and help you to do it. His was a fiery spirit, which had counseled and inspired many of the republicans, called revolutionaries, during the Spanish upheaval in 1906. His close friends were Malatesta of Italy and Ferrer of Spain. In 1909, when Ferrer was shot by order of the Spanish government for teaching science and evolution in his modern schools, he left Lorenzo Portet his entire fortune to carry on this educational work. Portet had established a publishing house in Barcelona, and continued to feed the Spanish mind with modern and scientific literature from Italy, France and England. He died in Paris in the year 1917 in his fifty-third year, with his greatest

wish unfulfilled—the freeing of the Spanish woman from the ignorance and dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church.

A few long, bleak, dreadful weeks in Liverpool, meeting Fabian Socialists, social workers and suffrage leaders, and then at last I sped onward to London, my headquarters during my stay in Europe. I visited France, Holland and Spain before the year was over, but London was always my "home." What can one say of the London of November 1914! "Business as usual" was the slogan on the billboards, and there is no doubt that England took the war lightly until the end of 1915.

The message of *"The Woman Rebel"* had preceded me to England. Especially in liberal, radical and Feminist circles was it well known.

To understand the growth and development of the birth control movement since 1914 it is interesting to recall the situation as I found it in England. My first desire was to get in touch with the Drysdales and the Neo-Malthusian organization. Upon my arrival in London, accordingly, I sent a letter to a well known printer, Mr. Standring, requesting the address of the Neo-Malthusian League. Communication was established, and I was invited to come to tea to meet Dr. Drysdale at his offices in Queen Anne's Chambers.

It was a rainy, wet afternoon, and the cheer of the fire burning in the grate was no less welcome to my lonely soul than the warm greeting accorded me. Dr. Binnie Dunlop and Dr. Drysdale received with applause the information that I had challenged the Comstock laws. It was only during the preceding year that they had decided to issue their own practical leaflet giving simple instructions on contraception. This was being sent out upon request to "any married or about-to-be married adult" in any country in the world, except the United States of America. It was Dr. Drysdale's principle that Americans should fight their own battles with Comstock. Between us grew up a close friendship which has lasted through those stormy years to the present time.

It came as a surprise to me to find on the door of the League's headquarters no name other than Dr. Drysdale's. I

was told that the Neo-Malthusian League was not considered a proper tenant, according to the landlord's ideas of propriety. To avoid conflict, the name of the organization was kept off the door. The Neo-Malthusian League had been organized after the Besant and Bradlaugh trial in 1877 by Dr. Alice Vickery and her husband, Dr. Charles Drysdale, the father and mother of the present C. V. Drysdale, then president of the league.

I was thrilled to hear for the first time of the celebrated Besant and Bradlaugh trial, which was one of the earliest tests of the law in England affecting birth control. Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant were champions of liberty and freedom. In 1876 a Bristol bookseller was prosecuted for selling Knowlton's "Fruits of Philosophy," an early American book on birth control, on the ground that it was "obscene" literature. The publisher pleaded guilty, and was let off on paying costs. Whereupon Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant, to test the law and gain a hearing, openly reprinted the book and advertised the sale of thousands of copies. They were arrested, and their case was tried by the Queen's Bench before the Lord Chief Justice and a jury. They conducted their own case before a huge audience. Their speeches to the jury set forth at length the whole Malthusian philosophy. Whenever they arrived or left the court, cheering crowds greeted them. The jury found them guilty, but the Court of Appeals quashed the sentence. Afterwards they toured England addressing large audiences and spreading the Malthusian doctrines. One hundred and eighty-five thousand copies of the book were sold.

It had been the policy of the Neo-Malthusian League to "educate the educators" on questions of family limitation. They believed that once the practice was established among the well-to-do and educated classes it would be taken up by the working classes as it seeped down to them. At this time (1914) the working classes had not yet been aroused to the possibility of obtaining such information nor to a conscious desire for its benefits, so far as I could ascertain. This was true even in 1920, when I addressed over thirty groups in

England, most of them women's guilds, but at that time, while there was a sad lack of any practical knowledge, except as given in the Neo-Malthusian leaflets, I sensed a keen interest everywhere in the subject and a quick awakening to its importance as the subject became known.

The Drysdales strove to advance the ideas and principles of Malthus, thus running counter to the theories of the Marxian Socialists in Germany and England. But while Malthus had advocated late marriage and strict continence until marriage, as the best solution of the population problem, the Neo-Malthusians of 1878 advocated early marriage and instruction in contraception.

In 1914 there were only a few pamphlets like Charles Knowlton's, which gave all then known contraceptive methods. Most of them were out of print, and only to be found at out of the way second-hand bookshops. Besides Knowlton's there were: Robert Dale Owen's "Moral Physiology," (1831); Dr. H. T. Thrall's "Sexual Physiology," (1866); Dr. H. A. Albutt's "The Wife's Handbook," (1877); Annie Besant's "The Law of Population," (1879); "The Malthusian Handbook," (1911).

Not until January, 1913, did the Neo-Malthusian League begin to alter its policy toward the instruction of the working class. Lectures on theory and methods were given on street corners, but their practical leaflet could be obtained only upon written application to the League. It was the name "Malthus," I concluded, which kept the idea from spreading to the workers. The very mention of that name brought arguments, usually stereotyped and moth-eaten, from both the radical and the working groups. It was amusing to see the different effect when the words "birth control" were used. At once there was acceptance of the idea, general agreement, and personal information was eagerly sought.

Many prominent people were anxious to learn about my battle with Comstock's laws. Such splendid and courageous figures as Havelock Ellis, Edward Carpenter, Olive Schreiner,

and numerous others discussed at length the problems and their solution.

It was through the friendship of that intrepid rebel Feminist, Stella Browne, that I was to meet Havelock Ellis. The new world of my dreams was being constructed on the ideas Ellis had put forth in his works. To meet him was an unhoped for privilege. Ever ready, with the weight of his vast knowledge on sex psychology, to advance the cause of woman's freedom and right to knowledge, he has ushered in a new day for womankind.

Havelock Ellis, more than any other individual, has brought the subject of sex out from the secrecy and dark obscurity where it had lain for centuries to its present open recognition as an all-pervading influence and the source of the greatest enrichment and beauty to men and women. As a youth he became interested in the psychological aspects of sex, and his training in medicine, with special attention to obstetrics, laid the foundation for future investigation and study. His great work, "The Psychology of Sex," in seven volumes, is the most exhaustive and authoritative treatment of the subject that exists. Havelock Ellis is a scientific investigator, a philosophic thinker, and a literary artist combined in one, and withal he has a peculiarly sympathetic insight into the nature and needs of women. To women he may indeed seem a god-sent liberator. Many other fields of life and art have been illuminated by his philosophic thought and poet's vision. He was fifty-five years old at the time I first met him.

An invitation to call came from him. It was a few days before Christmas, in the dark year of 1914.

My homesickness was acute. I was thinking only of my children across the ocean. I was then staying in a small room on the top floor of a dismal rooming house in Torrington Square, near the British Museum, where I went for daily study. That little room was heatless; there was a miniature fireplace, but I could not afford the luxury of a few coals to keep the place warm. I could not afford even to have the slatternly Cockney maid bring up evening tea. I went each morning

to the basement dining-room for my breakfast, thereby saving about a shilling a week.

Havelock Ellis, with characteristic foresight, had given explicit directions how to reach Dover Mansions. I got on a crowded bus at Oxford Street. Even though it was war time the spirit of Christmas—the English Yuletide—was in the air. It accentuated my own stark loneliness and yearning to be with the children and their Christmas tree.

Dover Mansions was located across the Thames in Brixton, just opposite the police station on Canterbury Road. Strangely enough, there was an auxiliary police station in Dover Mansions, directly under the apartment of Havelock Ellis. Ellis himself opened the door. His tall, straight, slender figure, his great shock of white hair, his massive head, his well-kept though straggling, shaggy beard, his wide, expressive mouth—that of a faun—all combined to give one the impression that here indeed was a veritable god.

I stuttered with embarrassment. He was silent. No other human being can be so silent and remain so poised and contented in silence as Havelock Ellis. I thought of the psychic indigestion which reading his studies in sex psychology had given me a year before. Dared I tell him that? The embarrassment of that silence does one of two things to visitors: either you like it and feel at home in it, or you leave it never to return. With his own hands he prepared the tea and toast and carried the tray into the room. We sat before the fire and talked and talked; and as we talked we wove into our lives an intangible web of mutual interests and, speaking for myself, I developed a reverence, an affection, and a love which have strengthened with the years.

Havelock Ellis became the guiding spirit in my study. Regularly we met in the reading room of the British Museum and lunched or dined together. He gave me clews to much valuable information which I stored away for future use.

Unlike Portet, Ellis was conservative and reflective. He urged caution and prudence. He believed so strongly in my case that he wanted to see me avoid all possible mistakes. To

THE EXILE, 1915

INDICTED

know him has been a bounteous privilege; to claim him my friend, the greatest honor of my life.

As spring came on, beautiful as only spring in England can be, I longed to get out into the country. I was fortunate enough, through the kind efforts of that charming and courageous pioneer Feminist, Dr. Alice Vickery, to find lodgings in a private home in Hampstead Gardens next door to that dear old lady's house. Serene, modest, an inveterate advocate of family limitation, Dr. Vickery was still, as the age of eighty, actively engaged in carrying this message of Malthus to all organizations concerned with human welfare. She had been the first person to propose in 1917 that contraceptive advice be given to needy women at government welfare centers, a concession that was fought for over a long period of years, and finally won in 1930. She had broad interests, was alert upon all the questions of the day, and was always actively engaged in writing leaflets or articles pointing out the weak spots in modern social programs.

For my benefit she brought out of her attic old circulars and mementoes of the earlier days of the Neo-Malthusian campaign. She opened her files for me, and thus I was enabled to familiarize myself with the unpublished history of this campaign through these old letters, reports and records, which I fear have since been destroyed. Often, when we found ourselves alone, she would reminisce concerning the stirring days of the Bradlaugh-Besant trial. Alice Vickery had attended the court every day. She told me that that great battle in the courts was won almost entirely because of the radiant personality of Charles Bradlaugh and the charm and eloquence of Annie Besant.

Nearly every afternoon I was invited to take tea with her in her charming garden. Nearly always she had guests—women of distinction, pioneers in other lines of thought and reform. It was in her home that I addressed a group of Feminists in the month of June, 1915. Among those present were two vigilant and progressive workers for suffrage, Louise Thompson and Mrs. Edith How-Martyn. The latter embodied

the indomitable courage and the audacity of the pioneer English suffragists. A graduate of the University of London, she had specialized in the study of Economics. She was a candidate for the London County Council, and was shortly after elected. Fearless, outspoken, an indefatigable worker for the cause of women, Edith How-Martyn immediately took up the cudgels in my behalf. She threw herself whole-heartedly into the cause of birth control. In the fifteen or more years since I first met her, that burning interest has never waned. Louise Thompson, modest, reticent, likewise seized upon the importance of my case, and they asked if I would relate my story and present my cause before a group of influential women at a meeting to be arranged for at Fabian Hall in July. Mrs. How-Martyn sent out a letter to women representing the various social and progressive organizations, calling their attention to my case and inviting them to hear me tell my own story at Fabian Hall. The meeting was held and was well attended, women executives from nearly all the important organizations in London being present.

It was there that I first met Dr. Marie Stopes. She was accompanied by that charming gentleman, Aylmer Maude, the celebrated translator of Tolstoy. Dr. Stopes remained after the meeting and invited me to her home at Well Walk, Hampstead Heath. I accepted. We talked freely and intimately on that eventful afternoon. She was then writing a book, "Married Love," which was to deal with the plain facts of marriage. She expected it to "electrify England." She then explained to me that, owing to her unfortunate previous marriage she had had no experience in matters of contraception nor any occasion to inform herself in their use. Her husband, she said, had been unable to make her happy and her marriage had not been consummated, and was later annulled. She realized, however, she said, from the address I had given in Fabian Hall, that such knowledge on contraception was important in the lives of women. Could I tell her exactly what methods were used and *how* they were used? I replied that it would give me the greatest pleasure to bring to her home

such devices as I had in my possession. Accordingly, we met again the following week for dinner in her home, and inspected and discussed the French pessary which she stated she then saw for the first time. I gave her my own pamphlets, all of which contained contraceptive information. Since that time she has advocated almost exclusively a device copied from the French cervical pessary, shown to her on that memorable occasion.

When Dr. Stopes wrote her book, "Married Love," it was not her intention to enter the campaign for birth control. It was sex knowledge of a general kind which she wished to impart. It took but the slightest reference in her book to the need of contraception to push her into the front ranks of the battle, where she must have been much surprised to find herself.

The economic struggle in England, the feminist and suffrage movements, Labor's ambition to live well and learn more, all of these forces gave a glorious opportunity to anyone who should carry the torch to the masses. People everywhere welcomed the phrase "birth control" as a new weapon, a new instrument in the battle for population control.

No one can overstate the splendid work done in England by Dr. Marie Stopes on birth control since that time. Her path was prepared for her by years of labor of the pioneers who had preceded her. For over forty years Dr. Alice Vickery and other brave women fought valiantly and consistently to inculcate the idea of family limitation into the minds of a generation of the English people. It needed only a new voice, articulate and clear as Dr. Stopes's voice certainly was, to gain momentum. But had the ground not been well prepared through years of ploughing by such scholars and thinkers as Ellis, Mills, Place, Carlyle, Drysdale, Knowlton, Besant, Bradlaugh, Anne Martin, and Dr. Vickery with her Feminist friends, and had not numerous pamphlets and leaflets been circulated by the *million,* the present situation in England would be vastly different. Dr. Stopes finds herself at the head of a movement she was tossed into by the very impetus of

the work the pioneers before her had done. She is to be congratulated for her quick wit and the ready faculty with which she switched her efforts from the plans which inspired the writing of "Married Love" to espousal of the birth control movement.

When her book was completed I took the manuscript to America and sought to get it published. Insult and derision met us on all sides. Finally, after two years, I succeeded in finding a publisher courageous enough to tackle the task. Dr. William J. Robinson undertook its publication, but only the expurgated edition was allowed to pass through the post office censorship. It has had a tremendous circulation in England but its value for America lay in the expurgated parts.

Very recently—April 6, 1931—the ban has been lifted which prohibited the importation of the complete edition of Dr. Stopes's book into this country. In his enlightened decision concerning "one obscene book entitled 'Married Love,' " Judge John M. Woolsey of the Southern District of New York declared he did not find "anything objectionable anywhere in the book."

VIII

HOLLAND

MY VISIT to Holland in January, 1915, was doubtless the most instructive of all my travels, and from it I derived the greatest benefit.

During my arduous studies in the reading room of the British Museum I gathered from the general survey of the birth and death rates of European countries that Holland stood out as the one nation in Europe where some force was automatically at work on what I should consider constructive race building.

Vital statistics show that, before 1876, the general death rate of the Netherlands fluctuated considerably but averaged 26 per thousand. By 1912 it had fallen to 12 per thousand. As I looked more deeply still into these mysterious figures it seemed probable that an examination of the birth rates for the same period would be revealing. I found that the birth rate in 1876 was 37 per thousand and that in 1912 it had been reduced to 28 per thousand. These two facts gave a still more illuminating and puzzling aspect to the question. Here the death rate

had fallen faster than the birth rate, which gave a natural increase in the population of 16 persons per thousand, meaning that the population of Holland was increasing faster than that of any other country in the world!

This was to me a point most difficult to understand. I had already begun to believe that a decreased population was what birth control would bring about, and I decried an increasing population. Yet here statistics were revealing facts to show that Holland's population was increasing in numbers! I could not help but ask myself how, if this were true, could birth control solve the population question at all? If birth control made for population increase, was this, after all, what was desired? Desperately, I began to look further into the statistics of Holland. Figures of infant and maternal mortality loomed before my weary brain. Here again I found a gradual lowering in the rate of deaths among mothers and children; a reduction in the proportion of stillbirths and abortions; an indication of a smaller amount of venereal disease; and a decrease of professional prostitution. The tables of maternal mortality gave Holland the lowest figure, while the United States of America were at the top of the list. There were three times more mothers' lives saved in Holland than in my native land. Mothers' lives were safeguarded in Holland and sacrificed in America!

Is it any wonder that I was impatient to go to Holland and dig out facts not only from records but from personal observation? Shortly after my first visit to the Neo-Malthusian headquarters in London I decided to visit Holland. Both Dr. and Mrs. Drysdale were most helpful in giving me letters of introduction to various people, principally Dr. Aletta Jacobs of Amsterdam, and Dr. Johannes Rutgers of The Hague.

In those early days I never stopped to fill my head with details. I did not write to anyone in Holland to inquire if either Dr. Jacobs or Dr. Rutgers was to be there. I just decided to go over to Holland and look the ground over carefully. Perhaps there at last I would find the answer to the many prob-

lems constantly popping into my brain the deeper I probed into the question of birth control.

The war was in its first phase. Passports and visas were important, and I was traveling under an assumed name. Already the blockade was threatened. To cross the Channel meant possible encounters with floating bombs, submarines, and all kinds of inconvenience and delays. It was no wonder that friends begged me to remain in London and to postpone my visit to the Continent until things were more settled. For me this was impossible; I was out to search for knowledge and facts. A case which might brand me forever as having committed an obscene act was pending in the United States courts. My children were awaiting my return home. How could I allow possible war difficulties to hold me back from the goal I had set out to reach?

Early in the morning of a cold January day in 1915, I arrived at The Hague. At the small, cheap hotel where I registered, the guests were gathered *en famille* at a long table and breakfasting on black bread, cheese and coffee. Speaking neither Dutch nor German, I could only sit and watch.

For the same reason, I could not telephone to Dr. Rutgers. So at nine o'clock the same morning I wrote his address on a piece of paper, hailed a taxi and set forth to call on the veteran of Dutch Neo-Malthusianism. Never shall I forget the feeling I had when, in response to my ring, a small, square aperture in the upper part of the door opened in an uncanny way, and a face, wizened, aged and inquisitive, appeared in the frame window. Finally after I had explained my mission, the doctor opened the door. I was ushered into his library to wait until he was dressed. We then went out to a second "breakfast" together at a nearby cafe, where we talked until noon about the situation in Holland and the difficulties in America.

From Dr. Rutgers I learned much of the complexities of the technique of contraception. He suggested that I learn his technique in adjusting the Mensinga and other pessaries. The following day, accordingly, I began my daily visits to his office

which I continued for several weeks. Under his tutelage, I began to realize the importance of individual instruction for each woman if the method advised was to benefit her. Fortunately, my knowledge of anatomy and physiology stood me in good stead for learning this quickly.

To my surprise, I found over fifteen different kinds of devices in use as contraceptives, and fourteen sizes of the diaphragm or Mensinga pessary devised by Dr. Mensinga in 1885 adopted and generally recommended in Holland. The fact that each woman had to be examined by Dr. Rutgers before the method of contraception could be advised presented an entirely new aspect of the situation to me. I began to delve with deep interest into the whys and wherefores. I bombarded the little man with questions concerning each case. At some sessions there were as many as ten or even fifteen women in his office seeking instruction. These I advised and fitted under his guidance without knowledge of the Dutch language.

Besides myself, two midwives were learning the technique from Dr. Rutgers. They came each morning to equip themselves with knowledge preparatory to starting a center in the outskirts of The Hague. There were already over fifty such centers, which Dr. Rutgers called "clinics." This name was given to the fifty consultation centers which at that time had been organized and were being supported by the Dutch Neo-Malthusian League, established in 1881. The nurses or midwives were trained by Dr. Rutgers as "experts" in hygienic methods of family limitation. They were then set up in practice in various towns or cities throughout Holland.

These nurses or experts not only advise women as to the best methods to employ to prevent conception, but they examine each applicant, supply her with a well fitted pessary suited to her special need, and instruct her in its use. The nurse teaches how to insert the diaphragm or cervical pessary and how to preserve its use. All of this help is given at a very small cost. Although each city has several clinics endorsed by the Neo-Malthusian League, most of the centers are located in agricultural and industrial centers.

Besides these official clinics for which the Neo-Malthusian League was responsible, I found many commercial places, run as supply shops, where any woman or man could purchase any contraceptive article desired regardless of needs or conditions. In some of these shops which at that time had displays in the windows there was a small adjoining room containing a reclining chair and a wash basin. The woman, if she so desired, was taken into this room, examined, and fitted by the shop attendant or saleswoman. This method was strongly disapproved by Dr. Rutgers and the Dutch Neo-Malthusian League. They directed their propaganda against commercializing this great service.

The officers of the Neo-Malthusian League objected to the procedure of these shopkeepers who set up examining rooms and offered instruction to purchasers of devices by lay persons who had no training whatever in the technique of contraception and in many cases very little knowledge of anatomy. Nevertheless these centers increased in number until the government took a hand in the matter in 1919. A law was then passed forbidding the public display of contraceptive articles in windows or offering information unasked. That is the only change of law and the only interference by the Dutch Government in the free dissemination of contraceptive knowledge since 1906.

I learned from Dr. Rutgers that the movement had been directed and advanced mainly for the benefit of the poor and the very poor. There was no policy on the part of the Neo-Malthusian League to limit instruction to people for physical or mental indications or solely for reasons of health, as in therapeutic abortions. There was a general attitude on the part of the public that the means of prevention were simple enough to guarantee safety in the average case and very seldom needed the skill of a gynecologist. The consequence of this procedure was that thousands of women who had in the early years been advised, instructed, and, judging by the fall in the birth rate, had attained successful methods of limiting the family, were lost to the movement. Records, detailed and full, had

not been kept until Dr. Rutgers took charge, follow-up had not seemed necessary, and the great opportunity of giving to the world case histories or mass facts over a period of forty years upon which scientific data could be based, was lost to the world forever. People did not go to hospitals for this advice; they did not go to doctors except to the family physician. Contraception was looked upon as no more unusual than we in America look upon the purchase of a tooth brush.

After the morning's work at the doctor's office I wandered about the city looking into shops to see what the conditions actually were. I spent hours studying in the libraries and in the Central Bureau of Statistics. I employed a translator to help me obtain facts and figures on Holland's birth and death rates, infant mortality, legitimate and illegitimate fertility, child labor, and wages, over the period of years from the establishment of the first birth control clinic in 1878 by Dr. Aletta Jacobs to the year 1914.

The facts were illuminating and the conclusions revealing. I glowed with fresh enthusiasm as these data proved that a controlled and directed birth rate were as beneficial as I had conceived they might be.

The problem of Holland's increasing population through birth control was solved when I learned that the spacing of births is the important factor in the practice of family limitation. The numbers in a family, or the numbers in a nation may be increased providing their arrival is not too rapid to enable those already born to be assured of livelihood and to become assimilated in the home life or the community before others follow.

Dr. Rutger's object was to direct the teachings of family limitation into homes where there was poverty, sickness, or disease. The birth rates and death rates were watched and discussed by the officers of the Neo-Malthusian League, and whenever there was seen to be an increase in either the birth rate or the infant death rate, a nurse was dispatched to take up her headquarters in that district, and a campaign of education was started. There was a gentle and sympathetic fol-

low-up into the homes where death had taken a child. The condition of the home and the attitude of the mother was reported to the League's officers, and proper advice was given according to the circumstances. I found that the infant mortality rates of The Hague and Amsterdam were at that time the lowest of all cities in the world, while the general and infant death rates of Holland were the lowest of all European countries. New Zealand was the only country that could boast of a higher record in the saving of lives.

After my arrival in Holland I had sent a note to Dr. Aletta Jacobs, the first woman doctor in Holland, founder of the first birth control clinic in that country (or in any country), requesting the honor and the privilege of an interview with her at any time convenient after my arrival in Amsterdam. I wrote her that I intended to make a full study of the subject while in her country, and complimented her on the brave stand she had taken, many details of which I had but recently gathered from Dr. Rutgers. A reply came. She refused to see me and stated bluntly that she did not wish to have anything to do with me or my studies; that it was not for "laymen" to interfere in this work; it was the doctor's subject, and only professional men and women should take it up. I was surprised, of course, and hurt as much as I could be hurt in those days, for I seemed to be one mass of aches, physical, mental and spiritual, all the day long. I went to bed sore in heart and soul, and awakened to start another day of aches; so that Dr. Jacobs' letter was just one more sting to an already numbed condition.

To do her justice, I hasten to say that in 1925, when she attended the Sixth International Birth Control Conference in New York at my invitation and as my guest, she took me aside one day and apologized for her letter and behavior, and moreover congratulated me for the advance the cause had made through what she was pleased to term my "impersonal leadership."

Holland has long taken a common-sense and scientific attitude on the subject of birth control, as was shown in 1876

when Dr. S. Van Houten, late Minister of the Interior, wrote a strong article in favor of Neo-Malthusianism in *Vragen des Tijds,* and Mijnheer Greven received his doctorate in law for a dissertation on the subject. Several other prominent men, including M. Heldt, the leader of the National Labor Party, enthusiastically championed the doctrine. In consequence, when the International Medical Congress was held in Amsterdam in 1879 arrangements were made for the late C. R. Drysdale, president of the English Malthusian League, to address a large public meeting, and a powerful league was immediately formed which was able to commence a vigorous propaganda among all classes of people. Thirty-four members of the medical profession joined within the first five years, and a practical leaflet describing contraceptive methods was issued in 1886.

In the early part of 1882 Dr. Aletta Jacobs opened a gratuitous clinic for poor women and children in Amsterdam and gave contraceptive advice and information. In 1883 Dr. Mensinga, a gynecologist of Flensburg, Germany, published a description of the contraceptive device which he and Dr. Jacobs had perfected and which, up to the present day, has proved the most satisfactory practical means of preventing conception for the largest number of women. It has since been adopted by the Dutch League and by most of the birth control clinics in Europe and the United States. By 1892 practical instruction could be obtained by poor people in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Groningen, and the Dutch League entered into a period of intense activity. Thirty-five thousand practical booklets were distributed in a single year, and midwives were trained and paid by the League to give gratuitous consultations. In 1899 it was found desirable to change the personnel of the League in order to make it more popular with the masses, and Dr. and Mrs. Rutgers took up the work with such success that the League then grew and spread into all parts of that well ordered country. As the salaried midwives had not proved thoroughly satisfactory, Dr. Rutgers had taken the bold step of instructing lay-nurses in the

best contraceptive technique, and at the time of my visit there were about fifty-five of these trained women in clinics distributed among the principal towns of Holland, besides several medical practitioners who appeared on the League's list as prepared to give advice.

In view of the fact that practical information has been available to the poorer classes on a fairly large scale in Holland for many years, the results are particularly satisfactory from the eugenic standpoint.

The work in Holland had at one time been recognized as a great public utility, and in 1895 the Neo-Malthusian League was given a royal decree by the Dutch Government. In 1911, however, when clerical influence got hold of the reins of government, there was a short period of reaction, and laws curtailing the rights of individuals were made. This lasted only a few years, and with the removal of the Clericals from power, freedom of speech and press was regained.

While to Dr. Aletta Jacobs goes the honor of establishing the first birth control clinic in the world, to Dr. Rutgers we owe the idea of training nurses and sending them into congested quarters to teach contraception to the overburdened mothers of the poor.

I found that birth control information had been more widely disseminated among the mass of the people in Holland than in any other country. There was no differential birth rate there, and to my great surprise I learned that there had been a rapid increase in the stature of the Dutch conscripts, as shown by army records and the official statistical yearbook of the Netherlands.

After finishing my course of study at The Hague I visited Amsterdam and Rotterdam. I had a list of the clinics in these cities and the addresses of fifty-six of the independent nurses, many of whom I visited. Although not controlled by the Neo-Malthusian League, many of these nurses had been trained by its secretary, Dr. Rutgers.

My visit to Holland was early in January. I remained there until the end of February, when I was finally able to secure

passage on a small freighter, which was the first to test out the blockade across the English Channel. At first the captain refused to take a woman on that challenging voyage, but when he learned I was an American woman "who knows how to take care of herself" he agreed to let me go. We left Amsterdam one evening and arrived in London three days later, a journey that usually takes but one night.

This trip to Holland revolutionized my ideas regarding the future of the movement. No longer could I look upon birth control knowledge as primarily a free speech fight. I realized now that it involved much more than talk, much more than books or pamphlets, no matter how widely or freely one might wish to spread pamphlets containing this information. That was not enough. I saw that personal instruction must depend upon physiological and anatomical knowledge. Only persons equipped with such knowledge could instruct properly and safely.

Now that I was convinced of this, a new field lay before me, and one far more difficult to travel, viz., to direct and educate the public to demand from the medical profession safe, reliable information, and to arouse and awaken the same profession to the importance of their having such knowledge to give. This has been a long, hard road, and the end has not yet been reached, fifteen years later.

I visited Dr. Rutgers again in 1920, and found a sad and unhappy man, ever willing that the younger generation should try its hand, but realizing how much they were lacking in experience. When, in 1921 Dr. and Mrs. Drysdale and Dr. Haire and I went to Amsterdam to attend a contraceptive conference, Dr. Rutgers' health would not allow him to join us. He died in September, 1924. His death was ten years too soon. Today the influence of his work goes on spreading itself sanely, quietly into the lives of people who are not afriad to think.

The results of my visit to Holland were to change the whole course of the birth control movement, not only in America but in England and Europe as well.

IX

THE EXILE RETURNS

ONE definite, though inexplicable, experience all during my exile from home kept puzzling me. Nevertheless, I passed it by as without significance. To this day, I have been unable to account for it; but because of the consequences I am going to relate it here.

Upon awakening in the morning, or even before I was entirely awake, I became conscious of the number 6, as if that number repeated itself again and again in my sleepy mind. It was as if an imprint of the figure 6 were stamped on my brain. This recurred again and again, and I often tried to fit it into some event of the day—six o'clock, or the sixth day of the month, or the price of tea, sixpence, or anything else amusing, and as casual or silly as I could make up. This I did to protect myself against the dread which seemed at first to come upon my consciousness with it.

This went on for several weeks. Then it came as something definite, like a large poster on a wall; and later still like a leaf on a wall calendar: "Nov. 6." It stood out, "Nov. 6."

I began to amuse myself with this date, and early in September, when I was making plans to work with a publishing house in Paris, I said, "Yes, I'll accept the position if you will guarantee to lock me up or send me to Africa or the North Pole until after November sixth."

"Why November sixth?" asked the publisher.

"I don't know," I replied, "but I feel that something important is to occur on that day; something different, and something which will knock all my present plans to pieces."

We both laughed, as cynical people outwardly laugh at such nonsense, *but*—I noticed later that he based our future plans for January 1st of the next year!!

Day after day, I studied and pored over books, articles and magazines in the reading room of the British Museum. Regularly I was at the gate early in the morning, and usually I was the last to leave at night. I was fascinated with my findings,—splendid material to stir the imagination, and facts galore to convince any judge or jury that birth control must be reckoned with in future social programs.

There was only one drawback to my enthusiasm. That was the subtle, persistent fear that Peggy, my little daughter, was not well. Night after night, her voice would startle me from a deep sleep and leave me in a state of agitation until I received the next letter containing news that all was going well. I tried to dismiss these fears, and would have them pretty well submerged. But always the same troubled voice would again upset me for days: "Mother, mother! are you coming back?"

One day, while visiting Mrs. Drysdale, I confided my fears to her. The Drysdales had a few months before lost a daughter fourteen years old. Both of them were suffering heartbreaking grief. Mrs. Drysdale stopped in the walk we were taking.

"Margaret dear, stay for nothing more, but go home to that child," she warned.

But to obey that desire was impossible. I had come away

from all I loved best to accomplish a task. I could not return until that task was finished. I had taken the road. I had considered all consequences. I had accepted the challenge. Alas! I could not answer that voice. My work had to be done. There had been born in me the belief that one owed it to those one loved always to do the straight and honest thing. It was my belief also that those who had faith in and love for you preferred you *not* to return with whines and excuses and explanations for failing to achieve results, no matter what sacrifices to themselves your accomplishment entailed. With this feeling, it was utterly impossible for me to return until I was ready to take up the cudgels and battle my way through to a victorious legal decision.

The war seemed never ending. I was about to accept the contract of three years from Lorenzo Portet's publishing house in Paris to supervise and select all the English books accepted for translation into Spanish, Italian, and French, when, in September, came the news that William Sanger had been convicted in New York for giving the pamphlet, "Family Limitation," to a decoy sent by Comstock. It was one of life's sharpest ironies that William Sanger should be drawn into my battle, and that he with loyal courage should be sentenced to jail for the dissemination of birth control literature.

The injustice of my husband's conviction in New York was one of the reasons that made me decide to go home to fight it out in the courts. To me this was a direct challenge from the unspeakable methods of Anthony Comstock.

William Sanger had been arrested by Comstock himself, who a few days previously had sent a decoy to his studio. The spy had told a story that had immediately aroused the sympathy of the impulsive and spontaneous artist. He claimed to be a friend of mine; he said he wanted the information for the use of his wife. Finally, William Sanger went to his library table, in the drawer of which were a number of my pamphlets, and handed one to the applicant. As he explained in a letter to me:

"On December 18th a Mr. Heller came to my studio and left his card.

"Not seeing me, he called the next day at 8 a. m. He said he had heard of your book, and that he was personally acquainted with you, and wanted one of the pamphlets on family limitation. I told him that I had no pamphlets that I knew of. He insisted that he wanted it for his own personal use. Finally, I went to the library table in which were your English and French pamphlets and your own on family limitation. I gave him the first one I found.

"I thought no more of it until the same man called again last Tuesday and wanted to know where your book could be bought. I told him of a store on Grand Street.

"A few minutes later a grey-haired, side-whiskered, six-foot creature presented himself and said: 'I am Mr. Comstock. I have a warrant for your arrest.' He was followed by that man, Heller, bearing a search warrant.

"He proceeded to search my studio, and found two pamphlets. I had to submit to two searches, one by each of these creatures. I was taken to Yorkville Police Court.

"Comstock said before we left the studio that I should be given every opportunity to prove my innocence, which I ignored.

"He seemed anxious to enter into a discussion of the case, saying that any statement I made would not be used against me. I refused to discuss it, saying that I wished to consult my attorney.

"He replied that lawyers are expensive and only aggravate the case; and, patting me on the shoulder, said he advised me, like a brother, to plead guilty, and he would recommend to the Court that I be given a suspended sentence.

"I refused to entertain any such plea.

"I told him that, although I was in Europe when the pamphlet was written and circulated, I believed in the principle of family limitation.

"He then asked me if you and I were living together or

had separated. I flatly told him I would give him no information. He asked me where Mrs. Sanger could be found. I replied that I would not tell him, and that he or any other official of the Government had no right to ask me that.

"I was arraigned, and bail was fixed at $500. I was in that filthy jail for 36 hours before bail was finally procured. The case will come up Wednesday for preliminary examination, and then be sent down to the Court of Special Sessions and tried before a jury. There is every possibility of getting one year's imprisonment and $1,000 fine.

"I shall try to have the case tried on the principle of family limitation and free speech. It will simply be a preliminary case to what your case will be on your return.

"In regard to your case, in going to the court with Comstock I asked him what he would do to the author of a pamphlet like 'Family Limitation.' *He said he would recommend that such a party be given the limit of five years' hard labor for every one printed.*

"It was also mentioned that *if I would give your whereabouts I would be acquitted.* I replied that they would wait until Hell froze over before that would occur. But there is a possibility of your being extradited.

"Twenty women have now banded together to fight the case on free speech and family limitation." (I never discovered who these twenty women were.)

It was the first and only copy of my pamphlet that William Sanger had ever given to any one. We had agreed before our separation that each of us was to go on with our individual work. William Sanger was not a propagandist, but he did believe in the justice of my cause; and he was not the man to cringe before Anthony Comstock. He was willing to defend his right to express his ideas and to stand up for his principles.

After innumerable delays, the date of the trial had been set. Conviction was inevitable. The Free Speech League had

made an appeal for defense funds. Gilbert E. Roe was to defend William Sanger. I waited in London for letters, hoping to hear from day to day.

So, one morning late in September, 1915, I set sail from Bordeaux. I wondered if I should ever reach New York. Not long before, the *Lusitania* had been torpedoed off the Irish Coast, and to cross the Atlantic in these hectic days was indeed a risk. I was going back to combat reaction, almost certain of meeting misunderstanding and injustice, with my husband in prison through my own activities. Perhaps, I decided, if there was no public support for this cause, it would be better, even safer, to pick up my children as silently as possible and return to civilized, though war-torn, Europe. America was home; it was my country, right or wrong—but in this case mostly wrong. But then after all, I told myself as the ship slipped out into the dangerous, foggy Atlantic, there I must fight; fight until the tide turned in favor of conscious and regulated parenthood. It would be a long battle, all too probably a losing one; but I seemed to be projected into it, despite all my conscious personal desires or reasons to the contrary.

I remember how interminable that voyage became. In darkness, with lights dimmed to avoid attracting the attention of German susbmarines, the ship plowed through the Atlantic. My own thoughts were as black as the night. Nervous tension crackled in the very air. That ship was carrying me onward, onward, to disaster, to prison, to inevitable sorrow. The old nervousness, the nervousness that comes with a queer gripping at the pit of the stomach which I always think is a thing of the past, was upon me. A queer sense of presentiment of evil was with me almost incessantly.

When I succeeded in snatching a few hours' sleep—mere minutes they actually seemed—I would wake out of unpleasant dreams. One of them was of attempting to walk through a crowded street, against traffic. The mechanical, automaton-like crowds were walking, walking, walking, always in the opposite direction. I was crowded to the curb, and had to walk cautiously. They were impossible to fight against. And

then suddenly in my dream the people turned into mice; they even smelt like mice. I awakened, and had to open the porthole to get the smell of mice out of my nostrils.

At last the lights of Staten Island, winking like spectres in the autumn mist, signalled our safe arrival in New York Harbor. We were at quarantine. As the old ship sidled along the dock at West Fourteenth Street on the gray morning of October 16, 1915, a new joy, a new hope arose in my heart, even though there was no one there to meet me, no one to bring a message of cheer, no one to wave a hand of welcome. But to see American faces again, after the ineffable hopelessness of Europe; to feel the rough democracy of the porters and of the good-hearted, hard-boiled taxi drivers; to breathe in the wine-like autumn air of New York—all that brought with it an irresistible radiation of the joy of life.

I picked up my small bag and walked away from the docks. I walked and looked, and sang to myself. Home at last! My heart was bursting with gladness, especially at the anticipation of seeing the children again.

At the first newsstand I passed, my attention was caught by the words "Birth Control" printed boldly on the cover of the *Pictorial Review*. It was a queer sensation to be welcomed, not by friends nor relatives, but by a phrase of one's own creation on the cover of a magazine, by the words which had sent me into exile.

I cannot describe the joy of being re-united with the children, the anticipation of taking up our lives peaceably together again. But the shadow of the indictments and a prison term was heavy over my spirit; the foreboding of evil I could not shake off.

Four days after my arrival, William Sanger was released from prison.

A few days later, I informed the United States District Attorney of my presence, and inquired if the indictments handed down the year previous were still pending. Birth control had been aired and discussed by respectable medical and social organizations, in various journals and magazines, so that the

violation of an obsolete statute no longer seemed so important. I was politely informed that the indictments were still pending. The case was called for the end of December, and then set for January 18, 1916. That left me sufficient time to organize a backing, so I set out to find out what had been done in my absence.

A meeting of medical men had been held at the Academy of Medicine. Dr. Abraham Jacoby, beloved dean of American medicine, had presided. From reports of the meeting there was by no means a clear account of the issue involved nor any harmonious agreement among the medical fraternity that birth control was in their province. However, through the efforts and sagacity of Dr. William J. Robinson, who had a keen sense for personal publicity, a small medical committee was finally formed.

Besides this exclusively medical committee, a "National Birth Control League" had been organized. Its officers were Mrs. Mary Ware Dennett, Mrs. Anita Block, and Mrs. Clara Stillman, all well known in radical and liberal circles. I learned upon my arrival that this new league had been given all my files, including the list of subscribers and friends of *The Woman Rebel.* Otto Bobsien, secretary of the first national Birth Control League organized the previous year in my home, had decided to pass these names along to the women who, he thought, were to be non-partisan workers in the field. Needless to say, I was delighted, and agreed wholly with that procedure. I hoped against hope that my suspicion of "liberal" women was unfounded.

To test out the sincerity of the officers of this new national organization, I wrote a letter to Mrs. Clara Stillman, the secretary, stating that I had returned to America; and that whether I should remain or not depended upon the moral support I was to receive. I asked a plain statement of what I could expect from their league. My letter was courteously answered. Mrs. Stillman wrote that an executive meeting was to be called the following week: if I would call at her home on the afternoon of the meeting, she could then tell me

what action the National Birth Control League would take in my case. I went out of my door when that afternoon came with high hopes in my heart and keen expectations that at least one group of women—the liberals—would join with me and link their own freedom in the fight for other women's liberty.

I was expecting a kind of reticence, a willingness to go half way on their part, but I did not expect to receive the reply which came as the answer of the National Birth Control League.

The executive committee had met. Mrs. Dennett, Mrs. Block, and Mrs. Stillman were still present, and I vaguely remember seeing a man—possibly James Morton, editor of *The Truthseeker*.

Someone spoke of the absurdity of my asking their League to support *me* in the trial I was to face.

Mrs. Dennett, whose ability to reason and whose mental agility I have since had occasion to wonder at, stood up, and in no uncertain terms spoke for the committee.

The National Birth Control League, she asserted, was a legal, law-abiding organization, the aim of which was to change the laws in an orderly and proper manner. They disagreed with my tactics, with my methods, with everything I had done. It stood to reason, Mrs. Dennett emphasized, that a law-abiding organization, formed primarily to change the laws, could not logically support a person who had broken those laws.

I arose and left the house. On my way to the door, however, Mrs. Dennett walked beside me and asked about my trip to Europe, and inquired as to the interesting people I had met. Would I mind giving her the names and addresses of those socially prominent and distinguished persons I had found to be interested in my work? It has ever been a source of wonder to me that Mrs. Dennett has not risen to greater political prominence, where her training and temperament would find suitable expression.

I had also sent a letter to Dr. Robinson. His reply was

more evasive. The medical committee was as yet only in embryo; he was not certain that it would ever function. He enclosed a check for $10.00 toward the expenses of my trial.

This, then, was the state of affairs when I arrived in New York in October, 1915.

Anthony Comstock had taken a chill at the Sanger trial, was taken to his home in a taxicab, and a few weeks later died.

As I looked over the situation, I realized the hopelessness of expecting support from such groups or sources. Yet, in spite of these depressing facts, I determined to remain and fight the case out in the courts, depending upon the common sense, the intelligence, and understanding of public opinion for the support I needed.

I settled down to organize my forces and to arouse the latent interest which I felt certain was ready to spring from the ranks of the American people. In this I was not disappointed.

But all of these problems, upon which all my future activities seemed to depend, were suddenly swept aside by a crisis of a more intimate nature, a tragedy about which I find myself even today, after the passage of so many years and so much activity, unable to write.

A few days after my arrival, my beloved daughter Peggy was taken ill. The old foreboding came back. It was as if, subconsciously, the meaning of the strange symbols and presentiments were gradually, inevitably, becoming clearer and clearer. I spent most of the days that followed watching over her. I saw the frail strength of her little body slip away. She did not respond to the treatment of the physicians. They hesitated to tell me the worst. Peggy's resistance was failing day by day. It was pneumonia.

The penalty was exacted one morning after a long vigil. It was only after I knew the worst that I was brought to any realization of the hour, the day, the date.

Then I realized with a shudder: it was the sixth of November!

The bottom seemed to have fallen from the very earth itself.

DR. ALICE VICKERY
Charming and courageous pioneer feminist

DR. ALETTA JACOBS
Head of the world's first birth control clinic in 1878

Havelock Ellis.

A great gulf of loneliness set me apart from the rest of the world. It separated me from everybody and everything—from facts—from sunshine, night and day. The joy in the fullness of life went out of it on that morning, and has never returned.

Here, then, was the answer to my uncanny dread, so prevalent in the Celt, that invading monster of fear which had haunted my nights and days all of that preceding year. Re-echoing endlessly in my memory was that unmistakable voice of my Peggy, calling, "Mother, mother, are you coming back?"—the voice that had awakened me night after night in my barren little room in London.

Even today, these events remain a mystery to me. The chasm of regret every mother who loses a child must face is enough to crush the bravest of hearts and the strongest of spirits. Yet despite all one must go on. Life must be lived out.

For a time, it was impossible for me to determine what to do. Grief so dulled my faculties that I was unable to think. I was numb in feeling, dumb in expression, and went about as in a sleep from which I did not even wish to awaken.

News of this tragic blow spread afar. My interests were gradually revived by the thousands of letters I received from old subscribers to *The Woman Rebel*. Boys in the North Woods, lumberjacks, bereft mothers, all sent sums of from one to ten dollars out of their meagre savings to help me carry on the fight. Miners from West Virginia wrote that their wives had for the first time in five, eight, or ten years been free from pregnancy, all due to the "Family Limitation" pamphlet. Miners had walked five miles to read the pamphlet. Others had had it copied by friends who could write. Men and women from all walks of life, from nearly every city in America, poured out their thanks to me in those weeks when I was bowed and soul-stricken with grief.

Money came pouring in beyond my understanding, not large amounts, but large for the senders, and oh such tender, sympathetic letters! I had never known until then that the loss of a child remains an unforgotten loss to every mother

during her entire lifetime. Women wrote of children dead some twenty-five years before, for whom they were still secretly mourning. They sent me pictures of dead babies, and locks of hair; and, as if it were a fresh outlet and relief to their troubled souls, they wrote page after page of their own sorrows.

This fresh contact with the source, contact with the motive power which had taken me out of my maternal corner two or three years before, renewed my desire and gave me the strength to carry on.

Deep in the hidden realm of my consciousness, Peggy has never died, but has continued to live; and in that strange mysterious place where reality and imagination meet, my little girl has grown up to womanhood. There she leads an ideal life untouched by harsh realities, immune to those influences which deform normal mortals.

For two years at least after her death, it was impossible for me to sit across from a child in a train, in the New York subway, or in a street car. Tears would flood my eyes, and I would move swiftly away to another seat or another car, or even leave the subway at the next station to the amazement and distress of those who happened to be with me. Never could I offer any explanation of this strange behavior—to explain would have brought about a veritable crisis of sorrow.

Today I am more able to talk freely about Peggy. Nature and Time—Time especially, which collaborates in all of life in mysterious and inexplicable ways—have sent their healing balms, even to the never ending sorrows of bereft mothers. Sometimes it seems to me that, intense as the pain and torture exacted of a mother is in bringing a child into the world it cannot be compared with her sorrow in letting it go out. Can men—even loving fathers—ever truly understand the two-edged sorrow the loss of a child inflicts upon womankind?

X

THE FIRST VICTORY

FOR two months after Peggy's death I was besieged with visiting advisers, who in all sympathy, begged me to give up the futile fight. Some of them had been to see the District Attorney, and he had agreed to be lenient if I would promise to cease all future activities and promise to be good. Committees of two and three, representing liberal groups and organizations, came, requesting me to give up the legal case and instead to take up the legislative work of changing the federal law. There would be help forthcoming from respectable sources (not just the poor working classes), promises of special trains to Congress, investigations, special commissions, and such a whoop and whack on Congress that victory would be in sight before the year was over. It was a tempting appeal. It seemed so sensible, so much easier than agonizing delays through the federal courts.

Then there was Samuel Untermyer, the famous lawyer. I was to see him. He was interested in my case. Perhaps I could persuade him to represent me. I was ushered into

a charming room, filled with American Beauty roses, to await Mr. Untermyer. He was friendly, broad-minded, sympathetic. Doubtless he had heard of my bereavement, and was ready to take the load of legal worry off my weary and tortured mind. We talked it out. His advice was to respect the law until it was changed and give up fighting the case. "There is no case to fight," he explained urbanely. "You have broken the law, and there is nothing anyone can do or say to argue that fact away. We must prevent your going to jail, however, and I'll see what I can do."

"It's not a question of my going to jail, Mr. Untermyer," I protested. "It's the principle involved. This information is not obscene. The kind of articles I published in *The Woman Rebel* did not give information to prevent conception. Consequently, they cannot come under the obscenity statute."

"Go to Congress and get your law changed!" advised that astute and distinguished lawyer. "It's the only way."

On all sides, advice was the same: "Give it up!" "You haven't the slightest chance to win."

Only the far off voices of the poor mothers themselves seemed to shout: "Keep on! Stand Firm! We're behind you, ten million strong!"

After I had received Samuel Untermyer's advice concerning the case, I made up my mind that his judgment of the case was final. But I could not accept his viewpoint. I did not believe that I was guilty in fact.

After my disappointing but clarifying interview with Mr. Untermyer, I decided to go into court alone and fight my own battle. It would be one woman against the United States Government. Come what might, it seemed to me that it was far better to stand alone than to let the issues involved be dragged down to furnish petty legal quibbles for men lawyers. . . . After all, wasn't it first and foremost a woman's battle?

I sent a letter to Mr. Harold Content the district attorney announcing that I was prepared to go on with the case and

asked him to put it on the court calendar as soon as possible. The case was called, and postponed to January 24.

I sent a letter to my good friends in England announcing my intention. I wrote: "I decided to plead my own case without counsel, as the ideas I have sought to promulgate are not within the range of the psychology of men lawyers. I have personally had occasion to see the lamentable results of having questions involving great moral issues subordinated to the legal quibbles in which lawyers so much delight."

I had no legal training. I knew nothing of the procedure of the federal—or any other courts. I had neither education nor practice in public speaking. Mine was the valor of ignorance. However, I felt that I would be guided by the greatness of my conviction, the profundity of my feeling. I was going to speak out of the fullness of my heart. I was confident in my faith that any jury of honest men would acquit me of any wrong doing.

In the meantime, much of my time was taken up with those who wanted to point out to me the folly of this decision. How generous people are with advice! How prodigal of disconcerting counsel! In those radical, liberal, and feministic circles, where eloquence was suave and expression articulate, I was very little known, and condescendingly received. The *Woman Rebel* and its message was considered as one reckless, expressive gesture. Its editor had struck her single match of rebellion and defiance; but she could be of slight significance in the "movement." With my sorrow, my manifold duties, my social shyness, I avoided meeting new people. My attitude thus created a certain reluctance among respectable folk who might otherwise have hastened to my aid.

"Who is she?" "What does she look like?" they asked each other, evidently picturing a militant, mannish Feminist, as caricatured in the American press ever since Susan B. Anthony's proclamation of 1880.

Indeed, I wanted support, but I could not take the initiative in asking for it.

One afternoon I was invited to show myself at a tea arranged by Henrietta Rodman in her Greenwich Village apartment. A group of Feminists and liberals had gathered to decide, evidently, whether I was worthy of their endorsements. Out of that meeting a movement was started to give a dinner in my honor at the Brevoort Hotel on the evening preceding my trial.

Alice Carpenter was the courageous instigator of that event. While I have never seen her since that inspiring night, I have thanked her in my heart a thousand times for the imposing array of enlightened and representative folk who gathered in the great dining room of the old Brevoort that evening.

Rose Pastor Stokes acted as chairman. Dr. Abraham Jacoby spoke, quite off the subject, it seemed to me. There were other speakers, some dealing with the trial of the morrow, others avoiding it. I was called upon to speak, and finally overcoming my nervousness, I arose and plunged into my "maiden" speech in defense of birth control. I had decided not to evade the issue:

"Friends: It seems to me that this evening and this gathering are significant and important, not only because the idea of birth control has brought together workers of such diverse outlook and temperament, but especially because of the time chosen for it—the eve of my trial.

"I realize keenly that many of those who understand and would support birth control propaganda if it were carried out in a safe and sane manner, cannot sympathize with nor countenance the methods I have followed in my attempt to arouse working women to the fact that bringing a child into the world is the greatest responsibility.

"They tell me that *The Woman Rebel* was badly written; that it was crude; that it was emotional and hysterical; that it mixed issues; that it was defiant, and too radical.

"Well, to all of these indictments I plead guilty! I know that all of you are better able to cope with the subject than I am. I know that physicians and scientists have a great tech-

nical fund of information, greater than I had, on the subject of family limitation.

"There is nothing new, nothing radical in birth control. Aristotle advocated it; Plato advocated it; all our great modern thinkers have advocated it!

"It is an idea that must appeal to any mature intelligence.

"Yet all this scientific and technical discussion has only had the effect of producing more technical and scientific discussion —all very necessary and very stimulating to that very small group of men and women who could understand it.

"But during all the long years this matter has been discussed, advocated, refuted, the people themselves—poor people especially—were blindly, desperately practicing family limitation, just as they are practicing it today.

"To them birth control does not mean what it does to us.

"To them it has meant the most barbaric methods. It has meant the killing of babies—infanticide,—abortions,—in one crude way or another.

"Women, from time immemorial, have tried to avoid unwanted motherhood.

"We all know the tribe of professional abortionists which has sprung up and profited by this terrible misfortune.

"We know, too, that when the practice of abortion was put under the ban by the Church, an alternate evil—the foundling asylum, with its horrifying history—sprang up.

"There is no need to go into the terrible facts concerning the recklessness, the misery, the filth, with which children have been and still are being brought into the world.

"I merely want to point out the situation I found when I entered the battle.

"On the one hand I found the wise men, sages, scientists, discussing birth control among themselves. But their ideas were sterile. They did not influence nor affect the tremendous facts of life among the working classes and the disinherited!

"How could I bridge this chasm? How could I reach these

people? How could I awaken public opinion to this tremendous problem?

"I might have taken up a policy of safety, sanity and conservation—but would I have got a hearing?

"And as I became more and more conscious of the vital importance of this idea, I felt myself in the position of one who has discovered that a house is on fire; and I found that it was up to me to shout out the warning.

"The tone of the voice may have been indelicate and unladylike, and was not at all the tone that many of us would rather hear.

"But this very gathering—this honor you have thrust upon me—is ample proof that intelligent and constructive thought has been aroused.

"Some of us may be fit only to dramatize a situation—to focus attention upon obsolete laws like this one I must face tomorrow morning.

"Then others, more experienced in constructive organization, can gather together all of this sympathy and interest which has been aroused, and direct it.

"I thank you for your encouragement and support. My request to you tonight is that all you social workers—so much better fitted to carry on this work than I—that you consider and organize this interest.

"This is the next most important step.

"And only in this way can I be vindicated!

"Let us put the United States of America upon the map of the civilized world!"

I sank back into my chair, not so much gratified by the prolonged applause that greeted me as simply relieved that the dreadful task of public speaking was over at last. The suspense, the anticipation, the waiting for the ordeal had intensified my fatigue. But my attention was aroused to the keenest point when, to my surprise, I suddenly heard the voice of a woman standing on the floor almost in front of me, an-

nouncing to the assemblage that she represented the National Birth Control League which was supported by adherents all over the United States (the adherents of my *Woman Rebel,* obtained through our lists, as a matter of fact); that this organization was going to stand behind Margaret Sanger in her ordeal; and that contributions and subscriptions were urgently needed.

I was so dumbfounded that I was speechless.

"Shall I stand up and speak out?" I asked myself. Only ten days previously I had been informed that I need expect no support from that league. Now that public opinion—enlightened, intelligent opinion, as represented by this brilliant gathering of two hundred men and women—was so evidently ready to support me, it was obviously the time to get on the band wagon.

But perhaps, I decided in all justice, the committee had changed its mind, and they are now really coming to my support. So I remained silent. But in view of later developments, I have come to believe that it is always an error to permit any deception or evil report to pass unprotested. The wrong that is then done will eventually have to be undone, and that is always a far more complicated problem.

I never joined the National Birth Control League although I was later on urged and requested frequently to do so. I never joined in any work with Mrs. Dennett because I could not agree with her way of thinking. Often, too, I regretted that our efforts could not have been combined. She was older, had had far more experience in organization work, and was a capable office executive.

I was much more of an agitator and perhaps a more stimulating speaker because I felt and knew more about the conditions of the poor mothers than she did. Doubtless, had we been able to work together, our combined efforts would have pushed the movement many years ahead. That early experience had left a deep impression which later years have sustained and justified.

Long before the Brevoort dinner, support and aid had come

from the most unexpected sources. The newspapers were taking an ever increasing interest. A photograph of myself and my two sons, taken after Peggy's death, had wide circulation and seemed to change the attitude of a cynical public. Looking back over those old clippings today, it is not hard to see that the newspapers were for me; but this interest was camouflaged by the impersonality of the news columns. Editorially, they were timid or adverse, so that to me it seemed they were, like all other conservative and reactionary forces, my opponents. I find in my files a letter from Jack Reed, then a youthful, ardent sub-editor of the *Metropolitan Magazine*. It brings to my mind the picture of that energetic, dauntless figure whose body now lies in a place of honor in Moscow. The letter is well worth presenting here, for it supports my impression that underneath the surface the rank and file of American newspaperdom has always been sympathetic with the cause of birth control. Jack Reed's letter was dated January 12. It follows:

Dear Margaret:

Here's a copy of the little thing I've been trying to get in the *Times*. They are very sympathetic with your case, and are going to cover it better than the other papers. But Birchall and Updegraff both told me that they are afraid that they can't print this, even as a letter. *The Times does not dare use* the words *'prevention of conception'* in its news columns. (The underscoring is Jack Reed's). However, there is a chance of its going on the editorial page, and I'll know tomorrow.

I'm sending it to my friend on the *Day Book* too.

Have stirred up the *New Republic* too, but they can't get anything in until after the trial.

Luck

Reed.

On the morning of January 18, I appeared before Judge

Clayton in the Criminal Branch of the United States Criminal Court, prepared to conduct my own case. I was surrounded by so many sympathizers that the *Herald,* at that time undisguisedly against the idea, described the atmosphere in the halls of the Federal Building as that of a Bohemian social function. "The women looked at their heroine," its story ran, "and talked and talked and talked." Elsie Clews Parsons made the suggestion that twenty-five women who had practiced birth control should stand in court with me and plead guilty before the law. Only one woman agreed to do it. Suddenly, however, and without warning, my case was adjourned for two weeks.

As public sentiment grew, telegrams and letters from all over America were sent to the judge and the district attorney in my behalf. Lawyers from various cities offered to come to New York to present the case free of charge. A letter signed by H. G. Wells, Gilbert Murray, and other distinguished Englishmen had been prepared by Dr. Stopes and sent to President Wilson:

To the President of the United States,
White House, Washington, D. C.

Sir—We understand that Mrs. Margaret Sanger is in danger of criminal prosecution for circulating a pamphlet on birth control problems. We therefore beg to draw your attention to the fact that such work as that of Mrs. Sanger receives appreciation and circulation in every civilized country except the United States of America, where it is still counted as a criminal offense.

We in England passed, a generation ago, through the phase of prohibiting the expressions of serious and disinterested opinion on a subject of such grave importance to humanity, and in our view to suppress any such treatment of vital subjects is detrimental to human progress.

Hence, not only for the benefit of Mrs. Sanger, but of humanity we respectfully beg you to exert your powerful

influence in the interests of free speech and the betterment of the race.

We beg to remain, Sir,

Your humble servants,

(Signed)

Lena Ashwell.	Edward Carpenter.
Dr. Percy Ames.	Aylmer Maude.
William Archer.	Prof. Gilbert Murray.
Arnold Bennett.	M. C. Stopes.
	H. G. Wells.

The case was finally postponed until February 14. In the meantime, the "story" was played up by the newspapers from coast to coast. That I was prepared to go to court undefended by counsel made the matter more difficult for the court. One New York paper said: "Government officials appear to be at sea over the question of bringing her to trial. It is said that Mrs. Sanger does not deny the offense and is willing to go before a jury on the merits of the case."

Judge Clayton, I learned upon good authority, was receiving an average of forty letters a day demanding the dismissal of the charges against me.

On February 15, the New York *Sun* published in its news columns this summary of the situation:

"Mrs. Margaret H. Sanger appeared at the Criminal Branch of the United States District Court yesterday to make her weekly demand that she be placed on trial for using the mails in her advocacy of birth control and other subjects which the Government considers improper. Because of the Government's reluctance to be used as an instrument in giving publicity to sex theories at this time, the Sanger case presented the anomaly of a prosecutor loath to prosecute and a defendant anxious to be tried."

The *Kansas City Star* characterized this trial as unique in the history of the United States.

Assistant United States Attorney Harold A. Content put the case over another week.

On February 18, the Government entered a *nolle prosequi* in the case. As reported in the press, Assistant District Attorney Content explained that the Government had decided not to continue the case because there had been many assertions that the defendant was the victim of persecution, and that had never been the intention of the Federal authorities. "The case was laid before the jurors as impartially as possible, and since they had voted an indictment there was nothing that the District Attorney could do but prosecute. Now, however, as it was realized that the indictment was two years old, and that Mrs. Sanger was not a disorderly person and did not make a practice of publishing such articles, the Government had considered there was reason for reasonable doubt." This memorandum dismissing the case was signed by H. Snowden Marshall, United States District Attorney.

Victory and vindication! This dismissal stands as evidence of the power of public opinion and active protest.

Mr. Content said: "We were determined that Mrs. Sanger shouldn't be a martyr if we could help it. We have treated her with the utmost consideration. We took into account the fact that she never had been in the business of circulating obscene matter for profit, and that her nervous condition made a jury trial inadvisable."

Well, when an army marches up the hill and then marches down again, some good reason is always given.

It was a great satisfaction to read the courageous editorial published in the liberal evening paper, *The Globe*—now, alas, no longer in existence. "Why was an indictment brought in the first place"; queried *The Globe,* and went on:

> "Are innocent persons to be harassed and then pardoned according to the fluent whims of a prosecuting officer? The facts are not in dispute. There was no discovery of new evidence. If the matter Mrs. Sanger sent through the mails was obscene two years ago, it is still obscene.
>
> "The quashing of the indictment settles nothing. The right of American citizens to discuss sociological ques-

tions according to their convictions is just where it was before—subject to the mutton-headed restrictions of some post office clerk and the complaisant persecution of a federal district attorney. Nothing has been proved or disproved; not a single question has been decided, nor right established or protected; it is as risky as ever to discuss sociological matters that meet with the disapproval of post-office clerks. The absurdity is presented of William Sanger despatched to prison because he was tricked by a detective into handing over a pamphlet, although repeatedly saying he was taking no part in his wife's propaganda, while the author of the pamphlet, who did not deny responsibility for its circulation, is allowed to go free. Surely here is no record calculated to increase respect for the majesty and impartiality of the law's administration."

There was much rejoicing and congratulating, but I could not consider it more than a moral victory. The law had not been tested. We were technically in the same position as ever. It looked as if a long battle lay ahead. I sent out the following letter to my friends and supporters:

To my Friends:

My case was dismissed by Judge Clayton, U. S. District Attorney Marshall, and Assistant U. S. District Attorney Content on Feb. 18th. They decided to acquit me instead of allowing a jury to do it.

This action on the part of the Government authorities was, I believe, the result of the interest you have shown in my case by the letters you have written to these officials and by the publicity you have given to the Birth Control cause. I thank you for your splendid support. I consider this acquittal by the U. S. Government almost as important as an acquittal by a jury (for an acquittal can only be used as a precedent in either case). We can now expect to continue to discuss the Birth Control issue without further difficulty from the Post Office Department.

My object is to establish Free Clinics in the various industrial districts throughout the United States, where a poor woman can go to be instructed in the methods to prevent conception and thereby preserve her health and enable her to care for the children to whom she has already given birth.

Three hundred thousand babies die in the United States each year before they are one year old, and three hundred thousand mothers remain in ignorance of how to prevent three hundred thousand more babies from coming into the world the next year to die of misery, poverty and neglect. Is this attempt to stifle knowledge in accord with other Twentieth Century methods? Certainly not. I appeal to you, comrade and friend to help me place this knowledge into the hands of every woman who does not want more children than her health will permit and her husband's wage support.

I am touring to the western coast, leaving New York City the first of April. I am sure there is interest enough in your vicinity to have a lecture. Write at once and tell me the capacity of the largest hall. Get together those who are interested and form a committee and write for dates. Let us make your town alive with interest on this subject, for it is the pivot round which all our social problems swing.

You have no doubt from time to time received from me pamphlets on methods of birth control. You have not been asked to pay for these, but a small contribution now will enable me to reprint these and circulate them among other women who need them.

Fraternally,
(Signed) MARGARET H. SANGER.

This letter was sent to all the old subscribers of the *Woman Rebel* and to the thousands of men and women who had written to me since my return to the United States. The result was that hundreds of invitations came pouring in, by

telegram and letter, requesting me to address meetings in various cities and towns all over the country.

That my plans for the future were definitely crystallized in my mind is evident in the following interview published in the New York *Tribune* in which I am quoted: "I intend to go right ahead with my work. I am going to California next month to establish clinics there. Upon my return I shall open them in New York. Already I have the word of four prominent physicians that they will support me in the work . . . There will be nurses in attendance at the clinic, and doctors who will instruct women in the things they need to know. All married women or women old enough to be married will be admitted free and without question."

A splendid promise—but difficult to fulfill, as the future proved.

XI

CLINCS THE GOAL

IT WAS an eventful year—1916—filled with incident, conflict, and publicity. Looking back at the yards and yards of newspaper clippings that were the harvest of a lecture tour which took me to the Middle and the Far West, I am surprised to find that such liberal and radical papers as the San Francisco *Bulletin,* then edited by that disillusioned iconoclast Fremont Older, now comfortably ensconced in the Hearst cabinet, opposed birth control; while on the other hand the Chicago *Tribune,* certainly no friend of subversive doctrines, declared editorially that "this is one of the problems that will have to be confronted by Europe after the war. Any attempt to control birth will be opposed by sentimentalists, but the stern facts are there for anyone to see."

When I left my home and children and country in October 1914, to prepare my case in Europe, I had visualized the birth control movement as a part of the fight for freedom of speech. It seemed to me then that the information given in pamphlet form and placed in the hands of fathers or mothers

would ultimately settle the problem of limiting the family. My studies in Europe and the practical course of contraceptive technique I took in Holland, as I have indicated, had convinced me that pamphlets, books or leaflets were of secondary importance to the consequences personally involved. I was convinced that personal instruction, personal advice, and personal examination were absolutely essential in order to guarantee the woman a fairly safe method. The safest method and the one advised over a long period of years in Holland, England, France and Germany was, and is today, the occlusive diaphragm or cervical pessary. That article must be made to fit the special requirements of the cervix and the vaginal canal as carefully as eyeglasses fit the eyes. Consequently, without a physical examination by a qualified person, who has some knowledge of anatomy, the advice of a pessary is useless. No woman is safe nor reliably protected from conception who obtains her information from a general source.

To carry out this program of instruction, I envisioned a glorious "chain" of clinics, thousands of them, in every center of America. I wanted to see specialists doing research work and gathering data to bring the subject up to other modern scientific standards. But first, in order to call attention to the necessity of this and to create public opinion in favor of birth control clinics, it was necessary to establish a model. I had Holland in mind, and remembered that in 1910 the Queen had issued a royal decree declaring that the work of the Neo-Malthusian League in the Netherlands was a great "public utility."

Now that my federal case was dismissed, I started on a lecture tour across the continent to California. I interviewed thousands of people, spoke in nineteen cities, and organized various groups into birth control leagues. Not wishing to tie myself down to committees and organizations, so I could be free to organize and agitate, I referred all of these groups to the National Birth Control League, and hoped for the best. Never was there a more interesting demonstration of mental attitudes

of a people than I found east and west of the Rocky Mountains on that tour in the spring of 1916.

A workers' group in Cleveland, the first stop after Pittsburgh, had arranged two meetings for me under the direction of Harry Weinberg, now a member of the medical profession. One was in the Unitarian Church, the other in a hall where the Industrial Workers of the World and other labor organizations held their meetings. At the former, I met Frederick Blossom, who was later to play a significant part in the birth control movement. Dr. Blossom was then an officer in one of the charity organizations, and was ripening for a change. He saw clearly the futility of the short-sighted policy of alleviation the charity organizations had adopted. He took to birth control like a duck to water, and, through his charming and winning personality and most disarming respectability, he was able to book me for a meeting at the Annual Conference of Social Workers which was to take place in Indianapolis within the next two weeks.

I went to Chicago, and was greeted by the message that the Women's City Club, the most powerful of women's organizations, would not permit me to speak before them. However, a large open meeting was to be held in a labor hall before about 1500 people, filling the building to its capacity. I also spoke at the Little Theater, due to the generous attitude of Maurice Browne, who has since become famous as the discoverer of the war play, "Journey's End." It was not the women of the City Club I then wished to reach, but the women of the stock-yard districts who were anxious for me to open a clinic near them. Chicago, however, was so well organized by social workers, through the influence of Jane Addams of Hull House, that it was extremely difficult for me to reach these women without sanction of a woman prominent in social work who "was not interested in birth control." Thus were the poorest mothers fettered by organized social workers, and kept in ignorance of means to help them limit their families.

Minneapolis was a surprise both to me and to my co-work-

ers. I was advised not to go up there at all, as it was the "most conservative city" in America.

"You won't get six people to come out to hear you," said a woman doctor from that city with whom I had talked in Chicago.

"Do you think I'll get six?" I asked.

"Quite possibly," she replied sarcastically.

"Then I'll go," I said. It was my idea to go wherever I was asked to speak, regardless of the numbers, large or small. I knew that six people properly converted and informed usually make sixty people think before very long.

But to my surprise the audience was one of the largest on my schedule. The meeting was held in the Public Library, and hundreds of chairs had to be brought in to take care of the overflow.

From Minneapolis I set out for Indianapolis to attend the Social Workers Conference at the Claypool Hotel. Thomas Mott Osborn and I were two speakers "on the side," and we both made the conference alive to the issues of prison reform and birth control. Catholic priests protested and raved at my being allowed to speak before the meeting, but the social workers were not of this opinion. Thus was the ball kicked across the country, carried by hundreds of the persons best equipped to do so.

St. Paul, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Detroit, all responded to my lectures with the formation of local leagues.

St. Louis distinguished itself by arrogant Catholic coercion. The Victoria Theater had been engaged for the evening. Tickets had been sold and all was seemingly going well. However, as the time for the meeting approached, without warning or notification, the theater doors remained closed while a crowd of two thousand people howled outside. Although police threatened to arrest me if I spoke to the people, I stood up in an automobile, Robert Minor, the artist, standing beside me, and spoke until the meeting was dispersed. This outrageous behavior on the part of the manager was explained later. He had been threatened by a high Roman Catholic official of

the church, and was told he would be protected if we threatened suit for breath of contract.

Then the fun began. St. Louis was not going to yield to arrogant dogmatic, religious dictation. The papers stormed. Carrying huge headliners, sarcastic cartoons of the Pope dictating to the citizens of St. Louis from the Vatican, incited the Men's City Club and the Women's City Club to invite me to speak at their respective meetings. Over forty Roman Catholic members of the Men's City Club resigned, while over one hundred new members joined. The hall was packed for the men's meeting, and I was told that not even Teddy Roosevelt himself had had so large an audience.

"The effort to suppress Mrs. Sanger," asserted the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch,* in commenting on the incident of the Victoria Theater, "has advertised her propaganda, piqued public curiosity, aroused popular interest, and gained public support from many who otherwise might be indifferent. . . If Mrs. Sanger were locked out of every theater and hall in town, her propaganda would spread underground where the opponent would be unable to meet and combat it. . . If she teaches error, her teaching will fail. If she teaches truth which appeals to the heart and conscience of men, suppressive measures are vain. We commend to her opponents the wise saying of Jefferson: 'Error of opinion may be tolerated when reason is left free to combat it.' "

From St. Louis I went to Denver, where Judge Ben Lindsey, fearless and courageous, now famous for advocating "companionate marriage," presided at the meeting.

My tour then took me to Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Portland, Oregon. When I arrived in Portland, one of the men there asked me if he could sell the revised "Family Limitation" pamphlet at my meeting. I said that I had no objection provided it did not involve anyone in arrests. To make a long story short, it was sold and three of the men were arrested. They were set free on bail, and a postponement of the trial was permitted so that I could deliver my scheduled

lectures in Seattle and Spokane and then return to be called as a special witness for them.

On my return, I found that the City Council and the Mayor had met in secret and had passed a city ordinance against that special pamphlet. This action on the part of five men enraged the women of Portland, and they issued leaflets asking: "Shall five men legislate in secret against ten thousand women?" Then one of the women doctors, Dr. Marie Equi, helped me to revise the pamphlet on "Family Limitation," and at a protest meeting on the night preceding the men's trial I asked for women volunteers to distribute the pamphlet. Ten women came forward, and four of us were arrested—the doctor, myself, and two Englishwomen living in Portland. We spent the night in jail, all of us refusing to accept bail, saying, "Let those who put us in take us out."

The following day the trial of seven of us was jointly held. Two well known lawyers came forward and volunteered their services. They were both men of the old democratic type, trying to keep alive a few of the basic principles of democracy. We had nothing to say about consulting these lawyers; they simply took the responsibility on their own shoulders, as citizens, and they were splendid. It would be impossible for me to give the details of that trial, but one of the significant things was that no oaths were taken. Both pamphlets were on trial, the first and the second. Both were considered "obscene." We were all found "guilty," and the men were fined ten dollars, which the judge said they need not pay. The women were not fined at all.

Interest in the case was intense, and the room was packed. On the day before, we had fifteen men walking up and down the streets with posters bearing such sentences as: "Poverty and large families go hand in hand"; "Poor women are denied what the rich possess." I don't remember them all, but each was good and to the point. In the wake of our trial, letters supporting our cause besieged the press, and thousands of requests for the pamphlets were received.

In Seattle as well as in Portland a league had been formed,

and was doing educational as well as practical work. My two lectures there were successful in every respect. In Spokane I spoke in the Unitarian Church, which was crowded, and a league was formed the following day.

These early meetings in all cities attracted women. They came in swarms. They came in droves to the hotel ballrooms where many lectures were delivered. Each seized a chair with mechanical precision and planted it forcibly as near the platform as the laws of space would permit. Within a few moments the ballroom would be miraculously filled. White-haired women struggled with chairs. There were numerous white-haired old ladies, on all sides waiting to discover what they had gone ignorant of all through their existence.

During the course of my trip more than a hundred thousand educational leaflets and pamphlets were distributed. I received one thousand letters from St. Louis alone. Women came to me in the hotels with babies in their arms. Men, ready for work, carrying their lunch baskets, came early to get a little private advice before I left the city. The farm women way down in Texas and Arizona, who never got out to a lecture or meeting of any kind, I cared most to reach. Their letters were most touching and tragic.

On my way back, the Cleveland League gave a public banquet in my honor, and interest in the cause of "clinics" seemed to spread like a forest fire.

Taking everything into consideration, my campaign was a great success. I had created a national public opinion in favor of birth control, had won the press to discuss the subject, had inspired the organization of leagues to carry on the work throughout the country, and had aroused the nation to a realization of its great moral duty toward womanhood. I was encouraged, but not satisfied.

The idea of giving contraceptive information in the privacy of clinics set up for that purpose seemed to meet with general approval everywhere. People in the West, however, resented the implication that they could not *know* what methods were in use. There was a general demand by people to be properly

informed on this practical aspect of the subject, as well as on the economic or historical side.

During my western tour, great activities were in process in New York. The challenge to women by Elsie Crew Parsons at the Brevoort dinner on January 18th had become a rebuke to many feminists and radicals. Meetings were called on the street corners, Union Square, Madison Square and elsewhere, leaflets distributed, several arrests were made. Bolton Hall, an attorney, Ida Rauh Eastman, wife of Max Eastman, were released on bail. Jessie Ashley, Mr. S. Kerr, P. Marmer were also arrested for distributing leaflets on contraception. The latter two were sentenced to fifteen days in City Prison; the other three being lawyers by profession, got their own cases dismissed.

Upon my return from the West in July, I announced my intention of opening a free birth control clinic within a few months. This announcement brought me an avalanche of letters, telephone calls, and visitors. Women with infants in arms called to tell me their needs. I was besieged night and day with requests for information. It was impossible to go out of the house without being approached by women or men of all grades and nationalities with questions.

One day a group of three women crowded into my small room at an inexpensive hotel on Lexington Avenue where I was then residing with my sister. They had come from Brownsville in Brooklyn. They each had more than four children, and neighbors had offered to care for all the children and urged them to come to me to bring back the information or "secret" of birth control. They told of their own hardships, poverty and misery; of their own helplessness, their struggles to make ends meet. One woman said that she had just recovered from an abortion from which she had nearly died; another abortion would "take her off." "Then what will become of my children?" she moaned. They rocked back and forth in their chairs as they related their miseries, every tragic event told so simply as each woman recounted her experience,

scarcely able to allow the friend to finish before she took up the story of her own sufferings.

When they had finished that hour's recital of misery, agony, and hopelessness, I felt as if I had been through it all myself. I wanted to scream out, to do something. I remember hearing the story of a man in Spain who had become so desperate over the injustice of innocent prisoners that he took a revolver and fired it at the first person he met on the street. Innocent persons of course he had killed, but it was his only protest, the only way the poor creature had of expressing his indignation. I understood this man that day after those women left me.

I wanted to open a free birth control clinic, a model clinic such as those in Holland. But where? And how could it be done with laws against it? Then, where was the money to pay for its necessities, I was asked. I pondered over these questions for hours. It seemed impossible to do it. I decided, as usual, to go out to look for a location; to take the first step. I would do that on the morrow. That much was settled. My telephone rang—a woman's voice—she had just come from California—she had brought a check of $50 to me from Kate Gartz of Los Angeles—where should she send it?

That check was the answer to my doubts as to the first birth control clinic being opened in America.

XII

A "PUBLIC NUISANCE"

THE selection of a place for the first birth control clinic was of the greatest importance. No one could actually tell how it would be received in any neighborhood. I thought of all the possible difficulties: The indifference of women's organizations, the ignorance of the workers themselves, the resentment of social agencies, the opposition of the medical profession. Then there was the law—the law of New York State.

Section 1142 was definite. It stated that *no one* could give information to prevent conception to *anyone* for any reason. There was, however, Section 1145, which distinctly stated that physicians (*only*) could give advice to prevent conception for the cure or prevention of disease. I inquired about the section, and was told by two attorneys and several physicians that this clause was an exception to 1142 referring only to venereal disease. But anyway, as I was not a physician, it could not protect me. Dared I risk it?

I began to think of the doctors I knew. Several who had

previously promised now refused. I wrote, telephoned, asked friends to ask other friends to help me find a woman doctor to help me demonstrate the need of a birth control clinic in New York. None could be found. No one wanted to go to jail. No one cared to test out the law. Perhaps it would have to be done without a doctor. But it had to be done; that I knew.

Fania Mindell, an enthusiastic young worker in the cause, had come on from Chicago to help me. Together we tramped the streets on that dreary day in early October, through a driving rainstorm, to find the best location at the cheapest terms possible. We stopped to inquire about vacant stores of the officials in one of the milk stations. "Don't come over here." "Keep out of this section." "We don't want any trouble over here." These and other pleasantries were hurled at us as we darted in and out of the various places asking for advice, hoping for a welcome.

Finally at 46 Amboy Street, in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, we found a friendly landlord with a good place vacant at fifty dollars a month rental; and Brownsville was settled on. It was one of the most thickly populated sections. It had a large population of working class Jews, always interested in health measures, always tolerant of new ideas, willing to listen and to accept advice whenever the health of mother or children was involved. I knew that here there would at least be no breaking of windows, no hurling of insults into our teeth; but I was scarcely prepared for the popular support, the sympathy and friendly help given us in that neighborhood from that day to this.

The Brownsville section of Brooklyn in 1916 was a hive of futile industry—dingy, squalid, peopled with hard-working men and women, the home of poverty which was steadily growing worse in the tide of increasing responsibilities. Early every morning, weary-eyed men poured from the low tenement houses that crouched together as if for warmth, bound for ten or twelve hours of work. At the same time, or earlier, their women rose to set in motion that ceaseless round of cooking,

cleaning, and sewing that barely kept the young generation alive. A fatalistic, stolid, and tragic army of New Yorkers dwelt here, most of them devout Jews or Italians, all of them energetic and ambitious,—but trapped by nature's despotism.

It was not a section unique in New York City. Manhattan Island was and still is dotted with such dismal villages. Even Queens, with its pretensions to a higher standard, has its share. But here there seemed to be an opportunity to bring help to as many women who were desperately in need of it as in any other one locality of the metropolis;—a message which could cut down the difficulties of the future.

We determined to open a birth control clinic at 46 Amboy Street to disseminate information where it was poignantly required by human beings. Our inspiration was the mothers of the poor; our object, to help them.

With a small bundle of handbills and a large amount of zeal, we fared forth each morning in a house-to-house canvass of the district in which the clinic was located. Every family in that great district received a "dodger" printed in English, Yiddish and Italian. (A facsimile appears on opposite page.)

Would the people come? Did they come? Nothing, not even the ghost of Anthony Comstock, could have stopped them from coming! All day long and far into the evening, in ever-increasing numbers, they came. A hundred women and a score of men sought our help on the opening day.

Women of every race and creed flocked to the clinic with the determination not to have any more children than their health could stand or their husbands could support. Jews and Christians, Protestants and Roman Catholics alike made their confessions to us, whatever they may have professed at home or in church. Some did not dare talk this over with their husbands; and some came urged on by their husbands. Men themselves came after work; and some brought timid, embarrassed wives, apologetically dragging a string of little children.

Every day the little outer waiting room was crowded. The women came in pairs, with their neighbors, with their married daughters, or even their husbands. Some came in groups,

MOTHERS!

Can you afford to have a large family?
Do you want any more children?
If not, why do you have them?

DO NOT KILL, DO NOT TAKE LIFE, BUT PREVENT

Safe, Harmless Information can be obtained of trained Nurses at

46 AMBOY STREET

NEAR PITKIN AVE. — BROOKLYN.

Tell Your Friends and Neighbors. All Mothers Welcome
A registration fee of 10 cents entitles any mother to this Information.

מומערס!

זייט איהר פערמעגליך צו האבען א גרויסע פאמיליע?
ווילט איהר האבען נאך קינדער?
אויב נים, ווארום האט איהר זיי?
מערדערט ניט, נעהמט ניט קיין לעבען, נור פערהיט זיך.

זיבערע, אונשעדליכע אויסקינפטע קענט איהר בעקומען פון ערפארענע נוירסעס אין

46 אמבאי סטריט ניעד פיטקין עוועניו **ברוקלין**

מאכט דאס בעקאנט צו אייערע פרייגד און שכנות. יעדער מומער איז ווילקאמען

פיר 10 סענט אינשרייב־נעלד זיינט איהר בערעכטיגט צו דיקע אינפארמיישאן.

MADRI!

Potete permettervi il lusso d'avere altri bambini?
Ne volete ancora?
Se non ne volete piu', perche' continuate a metterli al mondo?

NON UCCIDETE MA PREVENITE!

Informazioni sicure ed innocue saranno fornite da infermiere autorizzate a

46 AMBOY STREET **Near Pitkin Ave. Brooklyn**

a cominciare dal 12 Ottobre. Avvertite le vostre amiche e vicine.
Tutte le madri sono ben accette. La tassa d'iscrizione di 10 cents da diritto a qualunque madre di ricevere consigli ed informazioni gratis.

with nursing babies clasped in their arms. Some came from the far end of Long Island, from Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Jersey. They came from near and far to learn the "secret" which they said was possessed by the rich and denied to the poor.

To Fania Mindell, Ethel Byrne—the nurse, and myself these women told the constantly reiterated but ever-varying story of low wages and high rent, or irregular employment and steadily rising prices. They told us of a so-called home having only two rooms and one window, with two beds for a family of seven; of another in which three cots and a soap box had to suffice for eight children. Fine, hopeful men came to us with stories of wives broken in health and husbands broken in spirit, of sons sent to prison and daughters to prostitution. And always there were the helpless tales of children that were not wanted but came in never-ending numbers.

Newly married couples, with little but faith, hope and love to live on, told of the tiny flat that they had chosen, of the husband's low wages, and of their determination to work it out together if only the children would not come too soon.

Wrecks of women who were themselves already beyond relief came just to tell us of the tragedies and to urge us to save other women from the sorrows of ruined health, overworked husbands, and broods of sickly, defective, and wayward children growing up on the streets, filling dispensaries and hospitals, filing through the juvenile courts.

A gaunt skeleton of a woman suddenly stood up one day and made an impassioned speech to the women who were present: "They come with their charity when we have more children than we can feed, and when we get sick with more children for trying not to have them they just give us more charity talk! I tell you that some day they will erect a monument to Margaret Sanger on the spot where she came to help women like us!" She had been married fifteen years, was the mother of seven living children and four dead ones, and had undergone twenty-eight self-induced abortions.

When I asked a bright little Roman Catholic woman what

she would say to the priest when he learned that she had been to the Clinic, she answered indignantly: "It's none of his business. My husband has a weak heart and works only four days a week. He gets twelve dollars, and we can barely live on it now. We have enough children."

Her friend, sitting by, nodded a vigorous approval. "When I was married," she broke in, "the priest told us to have lots of children, and we listened to him. I had fifteen. Six are living. Nine baby funerals in our house. I am thirty-six years old now. Look at me! I look sixty."

As I walked home that night, I made a mental calculation of fifteen baptismal fees, nine funeral expenses, masses and candles for the repose of nine little souls, the physical suffering of the mother, and the emotional suffering of both parents; and I asked myself, "Was it fair? Is this the price of Christianity?"

A socially significant group were these puzzled, groping women; misled and bewildered in a tangled jungle of popular superstitions, old wives' remedies and back-fence advice—all the ignorant sex teaching of the poor, an unguided fumbling after truth. Unconsciously, they dramatized the terrible need of intelligent and scientific instruction in these matters of life —and death.

The most pitiful of all were the reluctantly expectant mothers, who had hoped to find a way out of their dilemma. It was heart-breaking to have to send them away, but there was nothing else to do. Their desperate determination to risk all, their threat of suicide haunted one at night. For them, birth control came too late.

It was on October 16, 1916, that the three of us—Fania Mindell, Ethel Byrne and myself—opened the doors of the first birth control clinic in America. I believed then and do today, that the opening of those doors to the mothers of Brownsville was an event of social significance in the lives of American womanhood.

News of our work spread like wildfire. Within a few days there was not a darkened tenement, hovel or flat but was

brightened by the knowledge that motherhood could be voluntary; that children need not be born into the world unless they are wanted and have a place provided for them. For the first time, women talked openly of this terror of unwanted pregnancy which had haunted their lives since time immemorial. The newspapers, in glaring headlines, used the words "birth control," and carried the message that somewhere in Brooklyn there was a place where contraceptive information could be obtained by all overburdened mothers who wanted it.

Ethel Byrne, who is my sister and a trained nurse, assisted me in advising, explaining, and demonstrating to the women how to prevent conception. As all of our 488 records were confiscated by the detectives who later arrested us for violation of the New York State law, it is difficult to tell exactly how many more women came in those few days to seek advice; but we estimate that it was far more than five hundred. As in any new enterprise, false reports were maliciously spread about the clinic; weird stories without the slightest foundation of truth. We talked plain talk and gave plain facts to the women who came there. We kept a record of every applicant. All were mothers; most of them had large families.

It was whispered about that the police were to raid the place for abortions. We had no fear of that accusation. We were trying to spare mothers the necessity of that ordeal by giving them proper contraceptive information. It was well that so many of the women in the neighborhood knew the truth of our doings. Hundreds of them who had witnessed the facts came to the courtroom afterward, eager to testify in our behalf.

One day a woman by the name of Margaret Whitehurst came to us. She said that she was the mother of two children and that she had not money to support more. Her story was a pitiful one—all lies, of course, but the government acts that way. She asked for our literature and preventives, and received both. Then she triumphantly went to the District Attorney's office and secured a warrant for the arrest of my sister, Mrs. Ethel Byrne, our interpreter, Miss Fania Mindell, and myself.

The crusade was actually under way! It is no exaggeration

GRANT AND STUART, 1916

Photo by Underwood & Underwood

WHERE THE CAUSE WAS BORN

to call this period in the birth control movement the most stirring period up to that time, perhaps the most stirring of all times, for it was the only period during which we had experienced jail terms, hunger strikes, and intervention by the Chief Executive of the state. It was the first time that there was any number of widespread, popular demonstrations in our behalf.

Nevertheless, it was a period fraught with emotional distress for us all. In it was involved the welfare of my sister, and at one time her very life. My eyes were open to the evils of prison life, and we experienced no small physical discomfort for the sake of emphasizing the importance of the birth control movement. Looking back I have no regrets. But, looking ahead, I am grateful that there looms no immediate necessity of repeating those passionate, dangerous, and menacing days.

The arrest and raid on the Brooklyn clinic was spectacular. There was no need of a large force of plain clothes men to drag off a trio of decent, serious women who were testing out a law on a fundamental principle. My federal arrest, on the contrary, had been assigned to intelligent men. One had to respect the dignity of their mission; but the New York city officials seem to use tactics suitable only for crooks, bandits and burglars. We were not surprised at being arrested, but the shock and horror of it was that a *woman,* with a squad of five plain clothes men, conducted the raid and made the arrest. A woman—the irony of it!

I refused to close down the clinic, hoping that a court decision would allow us to continue such necessary work. I was to be disappointed. Pressure was brought upon the landlord, and we were dispossessed by the law as a "public nuisance." In Holland the clinics were called "public utilities."

When the policewoman entered the clinic with her squad of plain clothes men and announced the arrest of Miss Mindell and myself (Mrs. Byrne was not present at the time and her arrest followed later), the room was crowded to suffocation with women waiting in the outer room. The police began bullying these mothers, asking them questions, writing down their names in order to subpoena them to testify against us

at the trial. These women, always afraid of trouble which the very presence of a policeman signifies, screamed and cried aloud. The children on their laps screamed, too. It was like a panic for a few minutes until I walked into the room where they were stampeding and begged them to be quiet and not to get excited. I assured them that nothing could happen to them, that I was under arrest but they would be allowed to return home in a few minutes. That quieted them. The men were blocking the door to prevent anyone from leaving, but I finally persuaded them to allow these women to return to their homes, unmolested though terribly frightened by it all.

Crowds began to gather outside. A long line of women with baby carriages and children had been waiting to get into the clinic. Now the streets were filled, and police had to see that traffic was not blocked. The patrol wagon came rattling through the streets to our door, and at length Miss Mindell and I took our seats within and were taken to the police station.

As I sat in the rear of the car and looked out on that seething mob of humans, I wondered, and asked myself *what* had gone out of the race. Something had gone from them which silenced them, made them impotent to defend their rights. I thought of the suffragists in England, and pictured the results of a similar arrest there. But as I sat in this mood, the car started to go. I looked out at the mass and heard a scream. It came from a woman wheeling a baby carriage, who had just come around the corner preparing to visit the clinic. She saw the patrol wagon, realized what had happened, left the baby carriage on the walk, rushed through the crowd to the wagon and cried to me: "Come back! Come back and save me!" The woman looked wild. She ran after the car for a dozen yards or so, when some friends caught her weeping form in their arms and led her back to the sidewalk. That was the last thing I saw as the Black Maria dashed off to the station.

XIII

HUNGER STRIKE

OUT of that spectacular raid, which resulted in an avalanche of nation-wide publicity in the daily press, four separate and distinct cases resulted:

Mrs. Ethel Byrne, my sister, was charged with violating Section 1142 of the Penal Code, designed to prevent dissemination of birth control information.

Miss Fania Mindell was charged with having sold an allegedly indecent book entitled "What Every Girl Should Know" written by Margaret Sanger.

I was charged with having conducted a clinic at 46 Amboy Street, Brooklyn, in violation of the same section of the Penal Code.

Having re-opened the clinic, I was arrested on a charge of "maintaining a public nuisance," in violation of Section 1530 of the Penal Code.

The three of us were held for trial in the Court of Special Sessions, with bail fixed at $500 each. This meant that our cases would be decided by three judges appointed by the Mayor

and not by a jury. When the cases were set for trial on November 27, through our counsel, Jonah J. Goldstein, I objected, because Judge McInerney, presiding during November, had expressed opinions which were prejudiced against contraception. This objection was overruled. Application for a trial by jury was denied by Judge Kelby. An appeal from this decision was immediately taken to the Appellate Division. Truly, I was being swiftly educated in the technicalities of criminal law, and the red tape which tangles them up.

This appeal was dismissed. Then a writ of habeas corpus, returnable before Judge Aspinall of the Supreme Court, was sued on the ground that Section 1142 was unconstitutional and that we were being unlawfully detained. Preceding this, we were "surrendered." The writ of habeas corpus was dismissed.

These appeals and parryings carried our cases through to January 8, 1917. My sister's case was the first to be tried. It was brought to a close on the afternoon of January 8. Counsel for the defense was allowed only fifteen minutes to present his argument on the unconstitutionality of Section 1142. The presiding justice replied that, in view of the attitude assumed in the past by the Court of Special Sessions in convicting defendants for violation of this section, the court was bound to hold the section constitutional regardless of argument.

My sister was found guilty, and on January 22 she was sentenced to thirty days in the Workhouse. A writ of habeas corpus as a means of suspending sentence during appeal was refused by Supreme Court Justice Callahan. She spent the night in jail.

Ethel Byrne promptly declared a hunger strike. I knew that she would not flinch. Quiet, taciturn, with a will of steel hidden by a diffident air, schooled by her long training as a professional nurse, she announced briefly that she would neither eat, drink, nor work until her release. Commissioner of Correction Burdette G. Lewis promptly announced that she would be permitted to see no one but her attorney.

While the newspapers were reporting—always on the front

page—the condition of the hunger striker, plans were hastened for a monster mass meeting of protest, to be held in Carnegie Hall. Helen Todd acted as chairman, and Dr. Mary Halton was an additional speaker. The hall was crowded by a huge audience of all classes. The women patients of the Brownsville clinic were given places of honor on the platform. The salvos of applause which greeted me showed that intelligent opinion was strongly behind us, and did much to give me the courage to fight with renewed strength for the immediate release of Ethel Byrne.

This meeting was acclaimed by the press as a "triumph of women, for women, by women." The meeting was said to have struck the right note—that of being instructive and persuasive, instead of agitational.

In the meantime, Ethel Byrne's refusal to eat and drink was crowding all other news off the front pages of the New York papers. Her defiance was sharpening the issue between self-respecting citizens and the existing law, which was denounced on every street corner as hypocritical. In the subway crowds, on street-corners, everywhere people gathered, the case was discussed. "They are imprisoning a woman for teaching physiological facts!" I heard one man exclaim.

"It will be hard to make the youth of 1967 believe that in 1917 a woman was imprisoned for doing what Mrs. Byrne did," exclaimed F. P. Adams in his column in the New York *Tribune*.

Meanwhile, the hunger- and thirst-strike was becoming more and more dangerous. Knowing her as I did, I realized that my sister would never give in.

Burdette G. Lewis, a man inclined to scoff at the idea of birth control anyhow, was then Commissioner of Correction in charge of Blackwell's Island—that isolated prison in the East River where prisoners can wail and scream, if they choose, beyond the hearing of sensitive citizens. Lewis refused to take Mrs. Byrne's declaration seriously.

"Others have threatened hunger strikes. It means nothing to us," he said with a shrug of his shoulders.

Mrs. Byrne later recounted the story of her torturing ordeal.

The warden's wife came to pick from the new offenders a couple of girls to wait on table and act as chambermaids in her quarters. A fair, motherly woman of good nature with a heavy Irish brogue, she looked them over, about twenty all told, and picked out Mrs. Byrne.

"Come on you, it's an easy job I am getting for the likes of ye!"

"Thanks," said Mrs. Byrne. "I don't want your job."

"What's that you say? Don't want to work, hey? Well, that's all right—then you won't want to eat either, I suppose?"

"No, I don't!" replied the hunger striker, and she kept her word. The old woman had her hands full, and she told me later that she did everything in her power to tempt the prisoner to eat. She pleaded, coaxed, tempted, prayed; all to no avail. She was terrified that Ethel Byrne might die in the Workhouse.

"Come on, nobody'll know you've taken a bite."

"I'd know!" retorted my sister.

As news came through from private sources, we who were associated with her in the movement began to worry. After all, Mrs. Byrne was the mother of two children who were then in Corning, New York. I hesitated therefore to encourage her plan.

But her stamina was remarkable. On January 24 she had spent the night in the Tombs. Although warned that she would likely be fed by force if she continued her fast, she replied that as a trained nurse she knew that they could not use forcible feeding successfully against her opposition. The next morning, while she was waiting in an anteroom for the prison van to take her back to Blackwell's Island, her application for release having been denied, the odor of eggs and crisp bacon drifted to her cell. We were told that this was by deliberate design on the part of prison officials to tempt her to eat.

Mrs. Byrne did not flinch. She was made of stuff that knows how to fight for principles. She returned to prison quietly insisting that the hunger strike would continue.

Mr. Lewis refused me permission to see my sister, and he

barred all reporters, after allowing them one interview with her attorney.

"I have no patience with Mrs. Byrne's effort to get advertising for her cause, and I won't encourage such a campaign by issuing bulletins on the progress of her hunger strike," he said stubbornly.

Nevertheless the news of what was taking place drifted out to me, chiefly through an old friend who was close to the higher-ups. We became more and more alarmed by the news brought us. Mrs. Amos Pinchot, chairman of a Committee of One Hundred organized for the defense, sent a telegram to Mrs. Byrne advising her to cease her efforts lest she starve to death. This was disturbing and confusing to the prisoner, thinking I wanted her to break her fast.

"It makes little difference whether I starve or not," she replied, through her attorney, "so long as this outrageous arrest calls attention to the archaic laws which would prevent our telling the truth about the facts of life. With eight thousand deaths a year in New York State from illegal operations on women, one more death won't make much difference."

All this served to convince the now panic-stricken Mr. Lewis that Mrs. Byrne was different, after all, from the alcoholics and drug addicts who had given him his previous experience, and with whom he had gallantly compared her. When she had gone 103 hours without food, he established a precedent in American prison annals. He ordered her forcibly fed. She was the first woman so treated in this country.

It was cruel, of course, but Commissioner Lewis issued optimistic reports of how simply forcible feeding is done, how little the prisoner resisted, how healthy she continued to be, and how foolish the whole thing appeared to him anyhow.

The truth was that Mrs. Byrne was in a critical condition after being rolled in a blanket and having milk, eggs and a stimulant forced into her stomach through a rubber tube. I realized this as soon as I heard that she was "passive under the feeding." Nothing but loss of strength could have lessened the power of her resistance to such authority. Nothing but

brutality could have reduced her fiery spirit to acquiescence. I was desperate; torn between admiration for what she was doing and misery over what I feared might be the result.

On January 31st, a committee headed by Mrs. Amos Pinchot, Jessie Ashley and myself went to Albany for the purpose of asking Governor Whitman to appoint a commission to investigate birth control and make a report to the state legislature. Governor Whitman, a wise, fair, intelligent executive and statesman, received us, and listened to our exposition of the economic and moral necessity for birth control; the medical theory behind its justification. He promised to consider appointing the commission. During the interview Miss Jessie Ashley introduced the subject of Mrs. Byrne's treatment on Blackwell's Island and the anxiety we felt about her condition. We tried to make him see the outrage committed by the state in making anyone suffer for so just a cause. The Governor offered Mrs. Byrne a pardon on condition that she would not continue to disseminate birth control information. This I was not ready to accept without consulting her, and my visit to her was denied by Commissioner Lewis.

Just how much an investigation by such a commission as we asked the Governor to appoint would mean we could not tell. The attitude of some members of the legislature was made clear that very day by Assemblyman Clarence F. Walsh of Albany, who complained about the presence of birth control lobbyists in this fashion: "I protest against the presence and activity of a representative of such an immoral, indecent, disgusting, and disrespectable sect. The subject is not only contrary to a fundamental law of this state, but to the commonly accepted standards of society." He was a Roman Catholic.

When we left Albany that day, I had the promise of a provisional pardon for Mrs. Byrne, but best of all I had in my purse a letter from the Governor to the authorities at Blackwell's Island authorizing me to see her. I was shocked and horrified when, in the late afternoon of February 1st, I saw my sister. She was lying semi-conscious on a cot in a dark corner of the prison cell.

She could not see me; her sight was dimmed. She recognized my voice and asked me to come closer. There was a rash on her face, and when she tried to speak her voice was muffled, a mere whisper. Her mind was already confused.

"I want to go away," she kept repeating. "I must go away."

I realized that the look of death was creeping into her glazed eyes. It was useless for me to discuss the question of pardon with a dying woman; I had to make up my mind and assume responsibility for her conduct in the future. There was no time to hesitate. I hurried back to New York and telegraphed to Governor Whitman that Mrs. Byrne was too ill to accept the conditions of the pardon but that I would promise in her behalf that she would not continue her activities in the birth control clinic.

The Governor, I found, was on his way to New York at the very time my telegram was sent, and I, together with members of our committee, visited him at his hotel early in the evening, where he wrote and signed the pardon. Mr. and Mrs. Amos Pinchot and I left for the Workhouse on Blackwell's Island. The trip on the ferry boat seemed endless, but finally we arrived, and after waiting about a half hour we were told that Mrs. Byrne was coming down.

Along the corridor she came, held on both sides by two burly attendants, the matron following with her wraps. The martyr's head was falling from side to side, and I could see from the pallor of her face, especially her nose and mouth, that she had already fainted.

I called out to the matron that she was too ill to walk. But orders had been given and were being obeyed.

I called Mrs. Pinchot's attention to my sister's condition.

Without hesitation, Mrs. Pinchot imperiously clapped her hands, and in a voice of command insisted that they lay her down on the floor and bring a stretcher. The result was like magic. The word of command from this quarter was not to be ignored.

A stretcher was brought, Mrs. Pinchot took her own warm fur coat and wrapped it around Mrs. Byrne, and she was carried

from the prison to the ferry boat from which an ambulance, previously engaged, carried her to my own apartment.

For two weeks a nurse was in constant attendance, and slowly, after a year's convalescence, she regained her health.

The day following her release Commissioner Lewis issued a statement to the press in which he declared that Mrs. Byrne had walked to the boat from the Workhouse. He had previously stated that he was to charge her for the expense that she had caused the institution in necessitating the calling in of an expert to feed her by force.

To bring a patient to a period of convalescence after an ordinary illness is an easy task compared with bringing to recovery a person who has undergone an eleven days' thirst as well as hunger strike. It seems to me that going without food was not so much the cause of her weakness as that she had not touched a drop of water or liquid of any kind for eleven and a half days.

There was not time to inform her of the conditions of her pardon, and moreover she was too ill to face the question. I still believe that I was right in accepting the conditions which the Governor imposed. There was no other course. I saw that she was dangerously ill, that nothing further was to be gained by her keeping on, and that her death would have been a terrible calamity. Her life was what mattered to me, regardless of her future activities. I deeply resented the casual attitude of the commissioner in charge of the case, and there were thousands of persons throughout the country who sent telegrams and letters expressing their resentment at her cruel treatment.

At any rate, by the time she was released the subject was a burning issue. Newspapers which previously had ignored the case, had to mention a matter important enough to bring the Governor of the State from Albany to New York. I approached my own trial wondering what the outcome was to be. Should I too go on a hunger strike? If a long sentence was imposed on me, I knew I should. I also knew I would stick it out to the end, no matter what that was to be.

The war was still on. America was about to enter her forces on the side of the Allies.

XIV

COURTS AND JAILS

ARRESTED at the same time as my sister, and like her charged with the dissemination of birth control information, I continued my activity as soon as I was released on bail. My first act had been to reopen the clinic in Brownsville. I was promptly rearrested and then charged with "maintaining a public nuisance." By the time my case came up for trial, I was becoming more and more familiar with legal procedure and courtroom conventions. I must say that I was also more and more puzzled by the stilted language, the circumlocutions, the respect for precedent. I saw the realities, the suffering. All of these statutes were being defended while over the whole country women were suffering and sacrificing their lives. I must confess that these legal battles, fought in a curiously unreal world, intensified my defiance to the breaking point. I longed for a battle in the open, in simple, honest terms, without hyprocrisy, above board, and on real merits.

My trial was as different from my sister's as day is from night. Although little more than three weeks had elapsed

between them, public opinion had changed in a very short time.

The courtroom was packed. Smartly dressed women were present as well as the poor women of Brownsville. Reporters turned out in large numbers. Hundreds of photographs were taken. I went to the courtroom accompanied by a group of prominent women who had entertained me at breakfast. Officially, I had the backing of several organizations: The International Child Welfare League, the Women's City Club, the Committee of One Hundred, the various State Leagues for Birth Control.

The Court of Special Sessions was seething with a crowded assortment of humanity. About fifty of the poor mothers of the Brownsville section crowded into the courtroom with their children, their nursing babies, their fruit, their bread, their pacifiers and extra diapers. No less than thirty of these mothers had been subpoenaed by the District Attorney. Their testimony was to be offered in evidence against me; but they, dear things, smiled reassuringly at me, certain that they were going to help free me. Most of them had been in the Amboy Street clinic the day the raid had taken place.

One by one, as they were called to the witness-stand to testify, they would bow acknowledgement to me, turning their heads toward me as they answered the questions of the District Attorney. Peremptorily they were commanded to address their answers toward the Court. Within a few moments the head would be turned again in my direction, as though looking for my approbation.

"Did you go to 46 Amboy Street on the afternoon of October 26th?" the District Attorney would sternly interrogate.

"Yes!" would come the timorous reply.

"What did you go there for?"

"To see Mrs. Sanger," was the prompt and invariable answer.

Time after time these women gave answers that were like nails to seal my doom in the records of the court. Yet each woman thought she was helping me to win my freedom. At

last one woman more miserable and more poverty stricken than the rest was called to the stand.

"How many children have you?" she was finally asked.

"Eight children and three that didn't live," she answered.

"What does your husband earn?" queried one of the judges.

"Eighteen a week when he works," came the unabashed reply.

After that reply, none of the other dozens of mothers of Brownsville were called to testify.

I admitted the charge of giving birth control advice to the poor mothers of Brownsville. The prosecutor had little to prove. I knew I had violated the letter of the law. I was fighting that law. I thought there would be no argument at all. But once again an untrue charge was made. Police Sergeant John Mooney said I had told him that our whole clinic was "a bluff," run to see if we could "get away with something, to do away with the Jewish people." As that accusation fell flat, he then tried to make it appear that the clinic was a money-making affair. Our ten-cent fee for the registration of patients did not begin to cover the regular expenses, of course; this was merely one of the stories our opponents had concocted to discredit us, if possible. We were faced with vindictive lies on every hand.

Justices Freschi, Herrman, and O'Keefe sat as a tribunal. My brilliant young attorney strongly advised me to accept a suspended sentence, if it were proffered. Owing to my ill health, he wanted me to avoid the prison term. The case was a big one, and to his legal mind, freedom alone meant victory.

I sat listening impatiently to what seemed an interminable discussion between my lawyer, Mr. Goldstein (now Magistrate), and Judge Freschi on the bench, until I was almost lulled to sleep.

Then suddenly I heard my lawyer declaring: "I do make the statement to your Honor, with the full authority of those who stand back of Mrs. Sanger, that the appeal will be prosecuted in an absolutely quick and orderly fashion, and that pending those appeals and that pending the serious considera-

tion by both the state in its commission and by the higher courts, by the appellate bench; that pending all that there will be no deliberate violation of any law of this kind."

At this, my mind sprang into action and surreptitiously I tugged at the coat tails of Mr. Goldstein. For it was not in my program to bargain for freedom by promising to "be good," or to discontinue my activities. To do so, I thought, would be a confession of guilt. I would not admit the inviolability of that statute while women other than myself were every day paying for it with their lives.

My attorney kept right on talking, refusing to notice my indignation. Then finally, I heard these words directed toward me: "Margaret Sanger, stand up!" There was an ominous gravity in Judge Freschi's voice.

"You have been in court during the time that your counsel made the statement here as to your purposes in future: that you intend to prosecute the appeal, and that pending the prosecution of that appeal neither you nor those affiliated with you in this so-called movement will violate the law,—this particular statute in question. That is the promise your counsel makes for you. Now, the Court is considering extreme clemency in your case. Possibly you know what extreme clemency means. Now, do you personally make that promise to respect the law and not to violate the Law?"

"I made the suggestion to Mr. Goldstein that so far as I personally and those working with me are concerned, we feel that we have gained about all we have started out to do; that is, we have awakened public opinion," I replied,—adding that I would refrain from violating the law pending the appeal to higher courts. To which the Court replied:

"If Mrs. Sanger will state publicly and openly that she will abide by the law, be a law-abiding citizen, without any qualification whatsoever, this Court is prepared to exercise the highest degree of leniency."

"That is, pending the orderly—" interrupted my attorney.

"Never mind 'that is,' " said Justice O'Keefe. "It is the law today, and it will remain the law until it is overturned, over-

turned by a higher court or overturned by the vote of the people. When that arrives, if it does arrive, then there will be no violation of the law."

"It must be without any qualification whatsoever, as stated by the Presiding Judge," added Justice Herrmann.

"I'd like to have it understood by the gentlemen of the Court that the offer of leniency is very kind and I appreciate it very much," I replied. "With me it is not a question of personal imprisonment or personal disadvantage. I am today and always have been more concerned with changing the law and the sweeping away of the law, regardless of what I have to undergo to have it done."

"Then I take it that you are indifferent about this matter entirely," said one of the judges.

"No, I am not indifferent," I replied. "I am indifferent as to the personal consequences to myself, but I am not indifferent to the cause and the influence which can be attained for the cause."

"Since you are of that mind, am I to infer that you intend to go on in this matter, violating the law, irrespective of consequences?" asked one of my judges.

"I haven't said that. I said I am personally willing to abide by this law and not to violate Section 1142—pending the appeal in this case, I mean."

"Then you absolutely and unqualifiedly say that you will abide by the law if this Court will show you extreme leniency?"

"Pending my appeal, yes," I answered. "That's the only way I can do it—pending my appeal."

"What is the use of beating around the bush!" exclaimed the Justice; and with undisguised anger he addressed these sharp words to my lawyer: "You have communicated to me in my chambers the physical condition of your client, and you told me that this woman would respect the law. We are not hardhearted men; we are not persecutors; we are not looking for blood, so to speak. This law was not made by us. We are simply here to judge the case, as we must judge all cases,

conscientiously, with an eye to the best interests of the whole people; and that's all we have tried to do here.

"We harbor no feeling against Mrs. Sanger. We have nothing to do with her beliefs, except in so far as she carries those beliefs into practice and violates the law. But in view of your statement as to her physical condition; in view of your statement that you intend to prosecute this appeal and make a test case out of this; and in view of the fact that we are to regard her as a first offender, surely we want to temper justice with mercy, and that's all we are trying to do. And we ask her, openly and above board, will you publicly declare that you will respect the law and not violate it? And then we get an answer with a qualification. Now, what can the prisoner at the bar for sentence expect, after the Court is inclined to be merciful and do all we can for her? I don't know that a prisoner under such circumstances is entitled to very much consideration after all. . . ."

"I am perfectly willing to promise so far as I can see," I interjected.

"We don't want you to do impossible things; it is only the reasonable, possible thing, and that is to comply with this law as long as it remains unchanged and as long as it remains the law. It is the law for you, it is the law for me, it is the law for all of us until it is changed; and you know what means and avenues are open to you to have it changed, and they are lawful ways. You may prosecute these methods, and no one can find fault with you. If you succeed, well and good. If you fail, then you have to bow in submission to the majority rule, for this is a government of majority rule, after all. It might be a whole lot more inconvenient for a minority to respect a law of the majority, but that is the government system of our country."

"I quite appreciate that. It is just the right chance, the opportunity to test it," I answered.

"Very good! You have had your day in court, you advocated a cause, you were brought to the bar, you wanted to be tried here, you were judged; you didn't go on the stand and

commit perjury in any sense; you took the facts and accepted them as true, and you are ready for judgment, even the worst. Now, we are prepared, however, under all the circumstances of this case, to be extremely lenient with you if you will tell us that you will abide by this law and respect this law and not violate it again."

"I have given you my answer."

"We don't want any qualification. We are not concerned with the appeal; we have nothing to do with that, Mrs. Sanger. This is not an appellate court."

And so the endless argument went on.

Finally, after what seemed to me a tiresomely repetitious discussion of the same theme, the decisive question was put to me:

"All we are concerned about is this statute, and as long as it remains the law will this woman promise here and now unqualifiedly to respect it and obey it? Now, is it yes or no? What is your answer, Mrs. Sanger?"

"I cannot respect that law as it stands today," I answered. Then I was sentenced:

"Margaret Sanger, with the additional evidence submitted by the learned District Attorney after your case reopened last Friday to meet the claim that the proof was insufficient, there is now additional evidence that makes out a strong case that you established and maintained a birth control clinic where you exhibited to various women articles which purported to be for the prevention of conception, and that there you made a determined effort to disseminate birth control information and advice.

"We are not here to applaud nor to condemn your beliefs; but your declarations and public utterances reflect an absolute disregard for law and order. You have challenged the constitutionality of the law under consideration and the jurisdiction of this Court. When this is done in an orderly way, no one can find fault. It is your right as a citizen. Refusal to obey the law becomes an open defiance of the rule of the majority as expressed in this statute. I can see no good reason

for all this excitement by some people. They have a perfect right to argue freely about amending the law, but not to advise how to prevent conception.

"While the law is in its present form, defiance provokes anything but reasonable consideration. It is wholesome that we have discussion by citizens on matters that affect the welfare of the citizens.

"People have the right to free speech, but they should not allow it to degenerate into license and defiance of the law. The judgment of the Court is that you be confined to the workhouse for the period of thirty days."

After the sentence had been pronounced by the presiding judge, there was a moment's silence, and then a murmur of protest and resentment spread throughout the crowded room.

I took a seat in the front row near the adjoining room, the doorway of which was filled with young men and attendants waiting their turn in court like actors in the wings of the stage waiting for their cue.

I was not surprised at the conviction. It was expected. I was relieved at the sentence of thirty days. This would not need a hunger strike protest. I can scarcely remember how else I felt; and the principal event which still stands out in my mind is the nonchalance with which one young man in the doorway waited for the call of his name. When the court officer called him, he was leaning against the wall smoking a cigarette. He raised his head to give the sign that he had heard, and yet kept on smoking. His name was called again, and he gave still another puff; then he deliberately stepped back into the room to extinguish the light; after which, with poise and unconcern he sauntered in a leisurely way into the courtroom to receive his sentence.

In the meantime, my attorney, Jonah J. Goldstein, was busy taking care of technicalities while my attention was taken up by reporters' questions. Before I knew what was wanted of me, I was being pushed into an anteroom with dozens of other prisoners. Here the first fingerprinting took place. I resolved that I should not be classed as a kind of criminal

whose fingers must be printed. I refused to submit to the indignity. Complaint was immediately made to the Court. The Judge replied that that was no part of his work, and he refused to take any action. I was not fingerprinted. We were then herded through the rear of the courthouse into an open courtyard and then into "Black Maria," the police patrol wagon.

There were eight or nine others in that wagon, about five of them young men not a day over twenty-one or twenty-two. Here I saw again the nonchalant youth who had been so deliberate in answering the call of the court. He and three others of about the same age were apparently gay, and laughed as they waved farewell to friends who loitered outside. "How long, Jake?" asked one of the friends.

"Five years!" I heard him reply. He laughed as he said it, and the other two boys shouted, "Three!" and "Three!" consecutively as they rocked to and fro with arms about one another's shoulders. I was horrified at the lightness with which these long sentences were passed over. Could they be out of their minds? Were these boys normal? Could liberty be so little regarded? The muscles in my throat contracted as I pictured the mother love once spent on their childhood days. And now the reckless, dauntless disregard for life and liberty, resulting in a ride in Black Maria and marking time in life for five years!

The women who huddled beside me in the wagon were more serious. One woman, especially, was hysterical and in tears, bemoaning the fact that her little four-year-old boy was waiting for her return and that she could not get back to see him and to arrange for his welfare until her sentence had been served.

After a short ride, we were all dumped out at Raymond Street and we entered the jail. The girls and women were ushered into a waiting room, there to be greeted by a thin-lipped woman attendant who gave one the impression that she was ready for anything or any one. She roughly pushed

the weeping girl through the doorway into the doctor's room, where she was to undergo a physical examination.

"Get ready over there, you!" she tossed over her shoulder at me.

"For what?" I retorted.

"For the doctor," she said, seemingly a little impressed. I sat unmoved, and waited for her return. I knew I was in for something, and I knew, from my inner self, that I'd be firm in my principles.

Soon the Amazon-like female swept into the room.

"Come on and get ready for the doctor's examination."

I had decided that I would neither be fingerprinted nor examined, nor in any way accept the same treatment as a pickpocket or a prostitute. I was not in need of an examination by the doctor, I replied, and refused to submit to it. "You're one of the fighting kind, are you?" A cruel grin spread over her metallic face. "Well, we'll soon fix you, young lady."

She swung her heavy, massive frame out of the door, leaving me trembling with excited determination to resist prison routine.

Within five minutes she returned, all smiles and politeness, an entirely different person. "Come on, Mrs. Sanger, you don't need to bother with that," pointing toward the examination room. I was taken upstairs into a large room. Then a heavy iron door was unlocked, and I was shown the cot of my cell and left alone.

The cell was one of a dozen or more, each of which opened upon two corridors, front and back. Never can I erase from my mind memories of that night. First, the bed clothing of the cot designed for me was so filthy that its stench nauseated me. It was one of those cold February nights when it was not a comforting thought to go without bed clothing. I wrapped my coat about me and lay on the bed. No sheets were in sight, and but one towel, which I used as a cover for my face and head. Then began a battle with roaches, bugs and rats which lasted until daylight. It was a relief to

have morning come and to be told to prepare for my removal to Blackwell's Island and the Workhouse.

Soon, after a cup of disgusting coffee, I was taken inside the van with other prisoners on our way to that house of torture from which my sister had recently been carried on a stretcher. We finally arrived at the Workhouse, and there again a long wait for action followed. The men were sent somewhere, the women into other buildings, while I sat and waited. After at least two hours of waiting, a woman in a coat and hat asked me to follow her. I did so. We left the building and climbed into another patrol wagon where two men in plain clothes sat silently while we drove and drove, seemingly for hours, until we reached Queens County Penitentiary.

There are some experiences that come to you in life that, although unexpected, are nevertheless partially expected in the subconscious. This was not my feeling in regard to serving a jail sentence. I believed fully and firmly that some miracle would happen and that I should not go to jail. The miracle did not happen. I went to the Penitentiary and spent thirty full days there. The only benefit I derived from my stay there was to lose fifteen pounds and stir up the germ of tuberculosis which had been latent for a few years. It's a good place in which to gain a slender figure in a short time!

A few pages from my diary will show the prison routine:

"Feb. 8th

"First Day's Routine

"Only a few minutes after the reporters left me at the Workhouse, I was taken into the Hospital or Doctor's room to be examined and fingerprinted. I refused both.

"Then I was taken back to Mother Slattery's room, and all of my possessions were returned to me. I was passed over to a woman and man, placed into a wagon, and driven some distance down the Island in front of the Penitentiary. We then got on the boat and came to New York City—Fifty-Seventh Street, I think. Not a word as to where I was being taken—Alice in Wonderland I truly was. After various

changes on cars, we arrived at the Queens County Penitentiary, Long Island.

"The warden, a nice, youthful chap, met me, asked me about lunch, and hoped I was not going on a hunger strike, to which I said no:—not unless I was forced on one from bad food.

"Introduced a very motherly, matronly woman to me and sent up some lunch. Put me into cell 210, where a woman named Josephine Blank is also near by in same corridor.

"Josephine is a very interesting type—a half-wild creature, irritated by chains and bars. Naturally intuitive, high tempered, and quick. Outspoken to an unpleasant degree at times. Has no use for men or women; but drinks a 'bit' once in a while. A kind, big-hearted woman, considered 'off,' but I think fairly intelligent. Has been arrested over seventy times.

"Afternoon drags slowly, and supper—bread and molasses and tea—seemed tasteless. Locked in at 6 p.m., lights out at 9 o'clock. Other women in corridor work for warden, and only come in at 7 o'clock. So my days are spent alone with erratic Josephine.

"Wednesday

"Cells open at 7 a.m., but bells ring at 6 o'clock. Breakfast—oatmeal with salt and milk, and coffee, two slices bread (saltpeter said to make it taste so queer).

"Clean cells—a walk in air. Talked with little colored girl, 'Liza,' who knew of Mrs. Sanger and called out, "You'se eats, don't you?' referring to Mrs. Byrne's hunger strike.

"Dinner of stew and bread. Afternoon, four letters. Called to Warden's room to be fingerprinted. Told him I objected to being classed as a criminal and would not submit.

"Supper of tea, bread, and stewed peaches.

"Women here seem to like Warden McCann and matron. Atmosphere here very different from Workhouse or Raymond Street Jail. Women are not treated so well as men, though—not allowed papers, nor to send out for anything like food,

papers or cigarettes as men are allowed to do. No visitors except two a month. All letters read going and coming—which is an outrage.

"Thursday

"Hominy and coffee (no sugar ever). Walked, talked to mulatto woman—dope fiend—indefinite sentence.

"Horrible liberties a state takes with human lives for a 'Crime' of drink or dope which should be considered disease. The court has a right to sentence her for one day to three years.

"Women out in yard look pathetically around the ground to see if the men prisoners have left stubs of cigarettes round. Tragic to see human beings forced to so low a level—digging in the frozen ground with fingers for stubs.

"Some lovely looking girls here—dope, mainly.

"Dinner—meat, potatoes, cornmeal pudding. No knives and forks, only *one* large spoon.

"Letter today and telegrams. Again question of finger-prints. Warden very decent about it all. No visitors."

I was given a clean cell and a clean prison garb—unlike Raymond Street Jail. Sunday I was invited to attend the Catholic Mass, an invitation I did not accept. Later in the week, a Roman Catholic woman visitor came to see me. She pleaded with me to be good, to give up such work of the devil and to save myself by joining the Roman Catholic Church. I expressed myself as freely as she had done, saying that I thought it was presumption on her part to assume she had anything to do with my life or my salvation; if I wanted her advice, I'd let her know. She continued to babble on about wickedness, and when I requested her to leave me she flung back the threat: "We'll get you yet!" Just what she meant I cannot fathom. The only reading material available were two Catholic weekly papers and the *Christian Science Monitor*. It was a relief to read the latter.

The Penitentiary housed about three hundred women and an equal number of men. Those sent there had been given

indefinite sentences of from one to three years. In the corridor with me was the Josephine mentioned in my diary who had been in jail some seventy times, mainly for drunkenness and disorderly conduct. She had a complex against policemen. Consequently, when she got out of jail and had worked long enough to get something to drink, she looked up the police in her district and started something. There were dope fiends, pickpockets, embezzlers, prostitutes, keepers of brothels, "Tiffany" or high-class thieves, accomplices of safe blowers, and a few "trans-Atlantic fliers," assistants to big hauls from Paris or London. Many of the women were mothers. A few were supporting children in good schools. The scheming and planning to keep from their families the painful knowledge of their whereabouts was worthy of one's deepest admiration.

I asked the warden if he would allow me to see the records of the women, especially as to the size of the families from which they came. He said that was against the rules, but he would give me such facts separately; and he assured me that I'd be surprised and disappointed. I was. The records he took from the books seemed to show that all of these women had been only children, or that, if a brother or sister had been born, it no longer survived. This was difficult to believe, but I had to accept it for what it was worth.

When I had become better acquainted with these same women, however, and had revealed to them my interests, they told me quite a different story. One after another, with bitterness in their voices, they told to each other and to me their real family history. When I inquired why they had given false statements for the records, they all agreed that it was to save their relatives from disgrace and constant annoyance by the authorities. It seemed to be an unwritten rule among these old-timers to keep their families out of the clutch of authority. We took a poll of thirty girls in our corridor, and the result showed an average of eight children to each family. Ninety-eight percent of the thirty had been born and reared as Roman Catholics.

One day an amusing incident happened when one of the

women prisoners asked me to give the other girls a straight talk after the matrons went down to their dinner. I gladly assented. When the time came, I asked the matron to let me into their corridor while she was gone.

"What for?" she asked.

"I'd like to give them a talk on sex hygiene," I replied.

"Ah, go on wid you!" she laughed. "They know bad enough already."

There were so many absurd rules and regulations which only aroused constant irritation and duplicity and did no one any good. The assistant police commissioner called to see me, and kindly asked if I had any suggestions for improving the conditions. I suggested more time out of doors, the existing arrangement allowing only fifteen minutes morning and afternoon for air and exercise.

The class snobbishness among offenders was highly amusing to me. No one cared how nor where another had been reared, what kind of a family background or education she had; but the nature of her offense was the key to her social prestige. The girl who picked pockets was looked down upon by the girls who helped themselves to pearl or diamond necklaces; the shoplifter did not sell her body in prostitution, etc.

To my surprise I was called upon to write and to read letters for some of the girls. I had not believed that any American-born girl of sixteen to eighteen years of age could neither read nor write. There were at least ten in that group.

Once, while passing through the corridor, I noticed a woman, whom I had never seen out in the yard nor at the table. She was tall, well-built, stately and erect, with white hair, and a face which did not belong in the Penitentiary. She refused to associate with any of the other prisoners, although she had already spent over nine months sharing their food and working beside them. Her story was unusual. A teacher by training and profession for fifteen years, she had married a minister, who died almost penniless. She moved from hotel to hotel, escaping angry looks and bills, until finally

she was arrested, convicted, and given an indefinite sentence of from one to three years.

As soon as I found out her story, we two got together on the task of teaching the illiterate girls to read and write. I sent out for school books, and Henry Holt and Company sent over, through Mabel and William Spinney, free of charge, several packages of primers and lower grade books to help in the instruction. That rebellious spirit was soon at work giving helpless girls the kind of instruction she was capable of giving. She was dismissed about six months later, and came to my office to show me the advancement and progress her girls had made.

I was never asked to do the regular work of cleaning cells, not even my own. I was not allowed to go into the workshop to sew or to operate the machines with the other prisoners. The Irish matron, when once asked why I did not work like the others, replied, "She looks better with a pen in hand." She had fixed up a table to serve as a desk for me, and I sat reading or writing during the entire day. Hundreds of letters came to me, and every day brought new interests and new friends.

When I was released on March 6th, 1917, although I was peaked and pale as a result of the unfamiliar routine of life in a cell, it was my spirit rather than my body which ached. I had been treated with reasonable decency, up until the last two hours. I had been able quietly to give birth control talks to the women with whom I came in contact, in spite of supervision.

But those last two hours were horrible. An attempt was made again, just before I left jail, to take my fingerprints. This was, I felt, an outrageous gesture. I resisted. It was time the authorities learned to discriminate between political prisoners and cut-throats. Why should I submit to having a record of my fingerprints filed away with those of thieves and narcotics? I had been uncomplaining through the thirty days, but I made up my mind to fight this needless assertion of authority even if it meant postponing my release.

The only brutal treatment I received in jail was during those last hours. Two burly keepers tried by force to get my fingerprints. It was a bitter-cold day, and outside in the courtyard my friends were waiting for me. I knew they were there, and I longed to see them, but even in order to join them, I would not give in to the demands of Warden Joseph McCann. At first we argued; then he turned me over to the two keepers, who tried to force my fingers down on the print pad. One of them held me while the other struggled with my arms, but I managed each time to keep my fingertips from touching the pad.

I do not know yet from what source I drew my physical strength, for certainly those men tried from eight until ten o'clock that morning to make me submit to fingerprinting. I thank the powers that be that I was able to hold out until relief came. My arms were bruised, and I was weak with exhaustion when an officer telephoned from the department headquarters, where my attorney had protested against the delay, ordering that I be released without the usual fingerprinting ceremony.

And then I was free! No other experience in my life has been more thrilling than that release. Through the big metal doorway of the Queens County Penitentiary I stepped on that gray day, and the tingling air of outdoors rushed against my face. In front of me stood my attorney, my friends and fellow-workers, their voices lifted in the martial strains of the "Marseillaise," led by Kitty Marion, the veteran of suffragettes. Behind them, at the windows of an upper floor, were the faces of newly made friends, the women with whom I had spent the month, and they too were singing for me.

Something choked me. I felt weak and dazed. Something still chokes me as I go through it in retrospect and hear the song again: "Ye sons of freedom, wake to Glory!" All the beauty and tragedy and hope of life's struggle seemed crammed into that moment of my life.

I plunged down the steps to enter the closed car waiting

for me. The echoes of those tender voices remained in my ears.

A small group of poor women stood together in the background, and as I waved and greeted them I became dazed as I saw before me, though aloof from the others, the tragic face of the woman from Brownsville who had run after the patrol wagon on the day of my arrest, calling, "Come back! Come back and save me!"

There she had been, the gate keeper told us, since seven-thirty that morning. She was afraid she'd miss me, and that she would be denied the information she was still seeking. She had ground a glass into powder ready to drink should she have another pregnancy.

Later there was a testimonial breakfast, a dinner, fine speakers, bright lights, honors, warm friendships. But the supreme triumph of everything to me was in the glowing faces of a group of Brownsville mothers who had come to the prison gates to greet me. I knew that hundreds of them were at last informed about contraceptive methods. That number would ultimately grow a hundredfold, a thousandfold, until the motherhood of the world should at last become consciously free.

XV

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

DURING all these exciting days it was necessary to keep a clear head, to be about one's business, to make careful decisions, to waste as little time as possible on trivialities and personal controversies, but definitely and constantly to keep the goal in sight.

The Brownsville clinic had been opened as a test and challenge to the New York State law, Section 1145. The court had refused to allow me to pay a fine pending my appeal. I had refused to promise to give up, to cease my activities: I had refused to promise not to inform women who wanted birth control facts. I had accepted the court's challenge. I accepted the prison sentence (even expecting it to be a year in the penitentiary for this right). Now that the sentence of thirty days had been served, what was the next step?

To appeal the case, of course; to carry it up to the highest courts in the land. At once my attorney appealed from the decision of the Court of Special Sessions to the Appellate Division (Second Department). In this court the judgment was

affirmed by Almet F. Jenks, Presiding Justice of the Appellate Division. Appeal was carried to the Court of Appeals, and on January 8, 1918, again affirmed, but a decision was issued by Judge Crane, in part, as follows:

> This exemption (Sec. 1145 of the Penal Law) in behalf of physicians does not permit advertisements regarding such matters, nor promiscuous advice to patients irrespective of their condition, but it is broad enough to protect the physician who in good faith gives such help or advice to a married person to cure or prevent disease. "Disease," by Webster's International Dictionary, is defined to be "an alteration in the state of the body, or of some of its organs, interrupting or disturbing the performance of the vital functions, and causing or threatening pain and sickness; illness; sickness; disorder."
>
> The protection thus afforded the physician would also extend to the druggist, or vendor, acting upon the physician's prescription or order.

This settled one charge against me. There was still another arrest on the charge for re-opening the clinic on November 16—"maintaining a public nuisance." Trial was set for November 27 before Justice McInerney. The prejudiced attitude of Judge McInerney being well known, I addressed to him the following open letter:

"Sir:—As a man, as a citizen of a democracy, as an American pledged to the principles and spirit on which this republic was founded, as a judge obligated by oath to fair and impartial judgment, do you in your deepest conscience consider yourself qualified to try my case?

"In those birth control cases at which you have presided, you have shown to all thinking men and women an unfailing prejudice and exposed a mind steeped in the bigotry and intolerance of the Inquisition.

"To come before you implies conviction.

"Now, in all fairness, do you want a case of this character

brought forcibly before you when the defendant feels and believes that you are prejudiced against her?"

It was reported in the press the following afternoon that Judge McInerney had "made application to the District Attorney to be taken off this case."

The decision by the Court of Appeals was the outcome of my case. It was a real victory. It was the first time such a statement had been issued on this law.

One other impressive result of our imprisonment was that the idea of birth control had spread into homes and was discussed by individuals and by groups which otherwise would never have known the words.

I had cause to realize this soon after I returned home. I was besieged with letters and messages requesting me to speak at clubs, to debate in halls, to write for magazines. It was even a greater deluge than that which had followed the publicity of the federal case the previous year.

Neighbors in the Chelsea district swarmed into my studio rooms day after day to tell me what *they* thought of the policewoman who had arrested me and who had conducted the raid. They likewise used the opportunity of the visit to ask a few personal questions which I did my best to answer. But the deeper I got into the current of the thought about me, the more I realized the necessity of a mass movement, to be organized for action.

The disappointment of my life was the lack of action on the part of the women in New York who, unlike the suffragists of England, sat with folded hands and stood aloof from the struggle for woman's freedom. Many of them had been interested enough to attend the trial, but there their interest ended. I really expected an active follow-up. I hoped to see those women who themselves had gained the knowledge of contraception, had benefited and developed thereby, to stand behind me, to re-open the Brownsville clinic, to undergo arrest, and if necessary go to jail. I expected a rise of indignation and protest such as the English women had voiced in going to jail and enduring days of hunger. Nothing of

this kind happened. American women were not going to use direct action, nor were they going to put themselves on record in approving ideas at this controversial stage.

During my thirty days in Queens County Penitentiary I had time to think of these things. There was no use in upbraiding, accusing or censuring women for not doing what I hoped they might do. The fact was that they did not feel this need as I did, and it was now my job to try to make them *see* and *feel* it by greater agitation and wider education.

I mapped out plans for a national campaign of four steps: agitation, education, organization and legislation. Just as I had had to change my plans and opinions after my visit to Holland, so now did I alter my plans of organization.

Previously I had scorned the idea of appealing to the club woman. I had no faith in her sincerity, no respect for her courage, and no reason to expect her to help in any way.

I wanted to reach directly the working women, the factory workers, the women of the labor unions and the unskilled workers. These were the people to whom my work was directed and for whom I was fighting. I felt that I was the protagonist of the mothers of the child laborers and of the wives of the wage slaves. I knew their lives; I knew their burdens, their sorrows, their problems.

For their freedom my battle was waged. I began to realize how helpless they really were, these mothers. How willing they were to stand beside me in the trial!—but I saw how insignificant their words or presence was in the eyes of the court. They counted for naught. For them to go to jail would place hardship on their children and families, and we would gain nothing by their sacrifice.

They did not want theories nor the proof of the necessity for family limitation. They were the living examples of its need—they were the proof. They wanted practical information. To give it to them was a violation of the state or federal laws. I could not advise them without violating the laws, and could not stay out of jail if I persisted in doing so.

I was of no use to them in jail. They were powerless to get me out. What then was the solution?

The answer was to make the club women, the women of wealth and intelligence, use their power and money and influence to obtain freedom and knowledge for the women of the poor. These laws must be changed. The women of leisure must listen. The women of wealth must give. The women of influence must protest. Together they must bring about a change of laws and convert public opinion to the belief that motherhood should be conscious and volitional. This, then, was the new plan I was to act upon. There was not the slightest doubt in my mind but that there was an overwhelming sentiment in the country for a birth control organization which could become powerful enough to change laws as well as to meet squarely the rising opposition of the Roman Catholic Church.

It was first necessary to equip an office where the thousands of letters I was receiving each week could be properly replied to. Frederick Blossom, Ph.D., had earlier come on from Cleveland to give six months of his time toward helping me to build a strong foundation for a national league. We found a suitable room on the top floor at 104 Fifth Avenue. The next necessity was a magazine to promote and extend the idea and to keep friends and workers informed of our activities. In February, 1917, the first issue of the *Birth Control Review* rang the clarion call that we were on our way to create a new structure within the shell of the old.

"The time has come," read the announcement, "when those who would cast off the bondage of involuntary parenthood must have a voice, one that shall speak their protest and enforce their demands. Too long they have been silent on this most vital of all questions in human existence. The time has come for an organ devoted to the fight for birth control in America.

"This Review comes into being, therefore, not as our creation, but as the herald of a new freedom. It comes into being

to render articulate the aspiration of humanity toward conscious and voluntary motherhood."

"Men and women of America, write into the pages of this magazine your vision of what birth control will bring to the human race. Raise your voice, strong, clear, fearless, unconditionally pledged to the protection of womanhood, uncompromisingly opposed to those who, to serve their selfish ends, would keep her in ignorance and exploit her finest instincts."

During the years from 1917 to 1921, the *Review* was the most strenuous work of my already strenuous life. I was solely responsible for whatever it contained. Besides being editor and managing editor, I also handled the proof reading and make-up, both of which I attended to in my apartment in the evening after a day's work at the office or after an evening's lecture. Many friends dropped in to give a hand at this work: "Billy" Williams, Walter Roberts, Harold Hersey, Agnes Smedley, and many others too numerous to mention. Our work was not in vain: within a year we had enlisted over 3,000 subscribers.

Two months after the launching of the *Review,* Frederick Blossom and I disagreed over its policy on the question of conscription and America's entrance into the World War. Dr. Blossom, who had been ambitious to be the man behind the gun, turned against me without reserve. As he had lent the money for the rent and furniture of the *Birth Control Review* office, he now claimed his ownership of the contents of the office by moving out all the desks, chairs, cabinets, tables, etc., including the account books and ledger.

I was left with the telephone on a soap box. Anna Lifshiz, my secretary, and I stood up and looked at each other in a bare and empty room! We refused to be beaten by this trick, and quickly found boxes for our cards and stationery, and then hustled over to the East Side to buy some second-hand office furniture.

Dr. Blossom had managed the finances of the magazine, and had been treasurer of the Defense Fund in my behalf. Repeated request was made of him to render monthly finan-

cial statements, but after months of waiting none was forthcoming, and the break was on.

Finally, he was summoned to the district attorney's office and given a week's time to render an accounting. Then began the whines and whimperings of the pseudo-radical. He had only recently gone over to the Socialist Party. Now he gained the sympathetic ear of some of the party leaders, and denounced Margaret Sanger as a conservative for using the instrument of the law in making him produce an accounting.

Two members of the Socialist Party came to me to plead with me to withdraw the charges against Dr. Blossom. If I would do so, they promised they would guarantee an investigation of the books and render an official accounting.

I agreed to do this, and withdrew the complaint on that promise. I gave over to this committee all the records I had and the proof I had had of questionable negotiations on Dr. Blossom's part. Two weeks later I read on the front pages of the morning papers that Dr. Blossom had been reinstated in the Socialist Party, while Margaret Sanger was censored by the committee—for exposing a scoundrel!

I later found out that the committee had not conducted an impartial investigation at all, but had given over to Dr. Blossom all the papers I had entrusted to them. They had allowed him to whitewash himself for the occasion.

So have the angels fallen. Personalities come and go; but principles must be kept constantly in mind and never deviated from. Thus only can victory be won, and faith in humanity restored.

The struggle to carry the magazine through those early years was strenuous. I was not a trained writer. My only experience in editing was on *The Woman Rebel.* I knew little of the technique of magazine writing, or proof-reading, or make-up. But I knew what I wanted to say. I also knew what needed to be said.

The first victory was in obtaining second class mailing privileges from the United States Post Office. The strain to finance the magazine was so great that its regular appearance was

always uncertain. The printer was friendly, and trusted me, as far as he was able to do so, from month to month. My lecture fees constituted the main source of income for its debts.

Subscribers complained that there was "nothing about birth control in it." They wrote indignant letters saying that they had paid $1.50 for a year's subscription and had found nothing about birth control in the magazine. They wanted contraceptive information, and were disappointed that the *Review* did not carry it. Thousands of letters had to be sent explaining that the federal law prohibited the sending of such information through the United States mails—always a good opportunity to educate.

Only five issues were published the first year. In May, 1918, a group of women came forward to help in its publication. We incorporated under the name New York Women's Publishing Company, and sold shares at $10.00 each. Each share carried one vote on the policy of the *Review*. Women like Jessie Ashley, Mrs. Frances B. Ackerman, Marion Cothren, Mrs. Mary Knoblauch and others were willing to cooperate. Mrs. Ackerman acted as treasurer through all those years of struggle and strife, a devoted, loyal friend and trusted co-worker.

Gathering the material was a task, as it had to be done at night after a full day's work at the office. People came and went all day interviewing, asking questions, appealing for help. Thousands of letters had to be tactfully and lawfully answered.

Besides this work, lectures were given, usually at night; and the pages of the magazine were made up between midnight and three o'clock in the morning.

Without the friendship and help of men and women who were trained in the technicalities of editing and make-up, the magazine could not have survived. The August 1918 issue was barred from the United States mails because of a review of Marie Stopes' book, "Married Love." The danger of having one issue suppressed was a possible loss of second class mailing privilege. This had been issued on condition that the magazine was to be published regularly each month. The fact that

the Post Office authorities had prevented the regularity of the publication was no answer to the charge.

After conferences, letters, and much worrying, the magazine continued on its erratic and uncertain way.

Late in 1917 a new aid had come to help—Kitty Marion, an English actress and veteran in suffrage, and a keen admirer of Mrs. Pankhurst. Born in Germany, Kitty Marion had been educated in England. At the outbreak of war she was in danger of deportation. When England entered the war, Mrs. Pankhurst realized the hardship of such an act, and persuaded Miss Marion to come to America. She had been forcibly fed in London jail some two hundred times, and arrived in America about the time Mrs. Byrne was being tortured in the Workhouse. Kitty soon voiced her opinion about birth control, and cast her lot with us from 1917 to 1930.

With so courageous and experienced a veteran, we began to sell the *Review* on the streets of New York City. We chose Broadway and Forty-Second Street as the location most traveled and peopled. Then began a series of arrests which lasted through the years. We were within the law, and needed no license to sell the magazine on the streets; but policemen did not know the law, and day after day Kitty Marion would be marched off to the police station to await the court's decision. Always the case was dismissed, but only after a lawyer was summoned, bail produced, and the case argued and proved in our favor. Few policemen knew the law in the name of which they arrested her.

We all took turns at selling the magazine on various street corners, but Kitty Marion was the only one who stood the test of years through storms of winter and summer, morning, afternoon, and evening, often till midnight. She became a familiar figure on Broadway. She stood the insults of the ignorant, the censure of the bigots, but remained good-humored, answering with quotations from the Bible. But while laughing outside, apparently light hearted and happy, her heart was heavy and sad as she realized the force of super-

stition and hypocrisy in the world which we were trying to enlighten.

The years from the termination of my prison sentence in 1917 to 1921 were leaden years; years of constant labor, financial worry, combatting of opposition, besides battling with a now awakened tuberculosis which had gained in ascendancy during my thirty days in the penitentiary.

My two children were in schools in the country where they had proper care, regular hours of sleep and study, and were out of the atmosphere of uncertainty and turmoil of city life. I had established a summer home at Truro, on Cape Cod. This was presided over by my father and provided the children with three carefree months every summer in what still seems one of the most beautiful spots in the world. A divorce from William Sanger was quietly carried through. I smile now as I recall that this was never reported in the newspapers —especially those newspapers which always seized on the pettiest details of one's private life to provide ammunition for one's enemies. I smile as I remember that despite the aggressive alertness of the reporters, no public announcement of our divorce was made until several years later.

The summer home in Truro, located on a hillock overlooking the Pamet, and from the veranda of which on summer days I used to watch the sun sink into the waters of Cape Cod Bay, was eventually to burn, as had the Sanger home in Hastings. Fate seems to decree that I should not be tempted to sink back into peaceful domesticity! At least at this period of my life.

The financial burden of paying the rent for the small room on the top floor of the office building at 104 Fifth Avenue, together with meeting the necessary expenses of the magazine each month, seemed at times too great to carry. Demand for practical information was overwhelming. I refused to associate myself with commercial firms, quack medical groups, supply houses, whose offers to support me beyond the risk of financial needs were promptly rejected. I refused also to be baffled by the lack of money to carry out my plans. Despite

the wails and groans and negative responses of those who were friends of the movement, activity continued.

The publicity was national. It was so tempting to many, that as fast as I could convince and arouse two or three people as to the importance of the work they set up independent organizations. For three or four years there was a constant clamor on the part of individuals to jump upon the birth control wagon for publicity, usually for themselves or for the pet theories they wanted a chance to air. I watched them rise and fall. Today I believe that there are three great tests to character: sudden wealth, sudden power, and sudden publicity. The last can be devastating. Few, very few people can stand it. Nothing goes to the head with such violence. At that time I knew, or rather felt this power. I saw it at work all about me. I made it a rule never to buy the daily papers when publicity was high. I never read what was written about myself. During those early years I did not subscribe to a clipping bureau. I had a definite, clear vision of the way I was to go, and I refused to be influenced by criticism or by personal approval.

I refrained from making new friends, and also kept aloof from my old ones. I sensed the influence that persons one likes can have over one. I never consulted. I never asked advice. I just kept going, night and day, visualizing every act, every step, *believing, knowing* that I was working in accord with a universal law of evolution—a moral evolution, perhaps, but evolution just the same. This belief, faith—call it what you will—gave me a feeling of tremendous power. It seemed at times to open locked doors. It attracted the right people; it gave me the physical strength to dictate hundreds of letters through one ill-paid secretary, to interview dozens of people each day, to write articles, to write and deliver lectures, debates;—in spite of a daily temperature, low but constant, and a decreasing bank account.

It would take many volumes to relate in detail the onward march of events during those years. I shall not attempt to do more than relate briefly some of those high lights of history as noted in my diary:

Governor Whitman promised to appoint a commission to investigate birth control.

Commissioner Bell ordered the suppression of a film called "Birth Control." In this I depicted the story of my last case, and told of the need of this knowledge among the mothers of the poor. Justice Bijur overruled the order, and issued an injunction restraining interference with the film. The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court reversed Justice Bijur's injunction, and the simple story of birth control was silenced and destroyed forever.

Enemies were using their power in every office of the city and state to inflict their personal religious prejudices upon the nation.

Theodore Roosevelt expostulated in the *Metropolitan Magazine* against birth control, urging large families among the well-to-do classes.

"Billy" Sunday, John Sumner and Dr. Howard Kelly issued statements against birth control.

Open-air meetings were held on the streets in various residential districts during the evenings in July and August, 1919, by friends organized by Helen Todd, a veteran suffragist of national reputation.

From all over the country reports came of new centers, new leagues organized to crystallize the sentiment for birth control. More than twenty-five birth control leagues were then in operation.

Dr. Morris H. Kahn of New York City announced that he had given instructions on contraception to over 400 women in one of the city dispensaries. His testimony had previously been refused when he was called to testify in my trial in Brooklyn. His testimony had been ruled out as "incompetent, irrelevant and immaterial," *if you please!*

Two birth control bills were introduced in Albany by different groups, one the "open bill," the other a "doctors' bill."

Mr. Frank A. Vanderlip issued a statement on the world condition resulting from overpopulation, and advised control.

The Court of Appeals reversed the decision of the Court of

Special Sessions in Fania Mindell's case—another victory. She had been convicted for giving out the book "What Every Girl Should Know" at the Brownsville Clinic.

A birth control league was organized in Mexico. My pamphlet, "Family Limitation," was translated into Spanish and given free of charge by the government of Yucatan with all marriage licenses.

About this period there came a division in the ranks of the old National Birth Control League. Mrs. Mary Ware Dennett withdrew from it as secretary, and became director herself of a newly formed organization, the Voluntary Parenthood League. This new organization had as its aim the repeal of the federal laws. Mrs. Dennett regarded the movement as a free speech and free press issue. She had scant knowledge of the anatomical intricacies of the methods of contraception, and believed, as I had also once believed, that it would settle the problem if all information should be accessible through the United States mails to every adult. Holland and my training there had convinced me that this was an erroneous attitude to hold. I know that reliable instruction, while available to all, should and must *come from* the medical profession. The organization began its work in Washington in 1919, and later introduced a bill in Congress which died in committee. The organization a few years later ceased its legislative activities when Mrs. Dennett retired from the work.

XVI

NEW SKIRMISHES

I REMEMBER almost innumerable instances of crude and usually unsuccessful attempts to silence me in those days: hotels boycotted by such organizations as the Knights of Columbus because the managers have purveyed luncheons to birth control advocates; halls, contracted and paid for, barred at the last minute on account of Catholic Church pressure brought to bear upon their owners; permits to hold meetings withdrawn by mayors or other officials in cities having powerful Roman Catholic constituency. Priests denounced me in churches and warned those who came to hear me of hell fire and the Devil! Few politicians, though they have sworn to uphold the Constitution, dare jeopardize their future as office holders by incurring the displeasure of the clerical authorities who often control the vote of their adherents.

Papers would not take articles stating the facts. "News" was what they wanted—"news," "fights," "police," "controversy," "arrests." Only in this way could my voice reach the millions. Innocently my enemies helped to make this possible.

In Milwaukee, Mayor Hoane was approached by the Catholic Women's Marquette League with an angry request to stop a meeting at which I was to speak. Mayor Hoane's reply was: "I believe in freedom of speech, freedom of press, and religious liberty. You have no right to censor this woman because you do not agree with her."

At Hagerstown, Maryland, a group of women tried to engage a meeting hall for me. Everywhere they were indignantly refused. In desperation, they at last secured a dance hall without chairs, and they rented the chairs from a neighboring undertaker who, when he learned that the chairs were to be used at a meeting where I was to speak, exclaimed reluctantly: "My chairs for that Sanger woman?" The owner of the dance hall promptly—and to me amusingly—defended me by saying: "She's not a woman, Mr.——, she's a lady." Cartoons had pictured me in a plane delivering a lecture from the air. There was an overflow crowd at the Hagerstown meeting.

Rabbi Mischkind, of Tremont Temple, New York, invited me to speak in his temple one Sunday morning. He was rebuked by his trustees, who forbade the meeting to be held. Rabbi Mischkind resigned from the Temple, and found another synagogue for my message at the same time.

In Cincinnati, Ohio, a birth control conference was to be held at a hotel, but the Knights of Columbus opposed the plan and threatened the managers of the hotel with a future boycott unless we were barred from meeting. A group of Masons then came forward and stood firmly behind the management, insisting that we were in our rights to hold a scientific conference there. The meeting was held.

It was no wonder I was always uncertain in going to a new city as to my return. I never knew where I should spend the night.

In Albany, New York, two birth control meetings were to be held, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. However, the manager of the Ten Eyck Hotel, where the meetings were to be held, broke his contract at the order of Mayor Hackett, who forbade any meeting to be held in Albany at

which I was to speak. The meeting in the afternoon, with other speakers, was allowed to go on, but the evening meeting, at which I was to be the principal speaker, was closed down. It was held in a private home a week later.

In Syracuse, New York, where a state conference on birth control was to be held, a Catholic city council passed an ordinance making it a misdemeanor to congregate for such a purpose. Great publicity resulted, with violent protests from citizens and the faculty of Syracuse University. Mayor Walrath vetoed the ordinance, the Common Council failed by two votes to override his veto, and the conference took place.

Boston still remains the one city whose Mayor (Curley) threatens the loss of license to any manager of hall or theater who allows me to speak within its portals. The Civil Liberties Union still has this threat in its files, and I have offered myself on the scaffold of Free Speech any time the citizens of Boston request me to come to make the fight.

The then reactionary attitude of the Protestant Church reflected itself when, on September 15, 1922, the House of Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church, meeting at Portland, Oregon, put itself on record against birth control. This was a feature of the report by the Joint Commission on Home and Family Life presented by Bishop Moreland of Sacramento, California. It was one of the few reports which went through the meeting without discussion, as if intimidating the members into silence.

I knew that this opinion reflected the sentiment of only a minority in the Church.

To offset this report, a questionnaire was sent out to professional men and women which brought back a splendid harvest for our files. Distinguished men of many scientific fields spoke out in favor of our object. The list included such men as Professor E. A. Ross, Theodore Dreiser, Major-General John O'Ryan, Thomas Nixon Carver, professor of economics at Harvard University, W. F. Wilcox, professor of sociology at Cornell University, Owen R. Lovejoy, general secretary of the National Child Labor Commission, Professor E. M. East of Harvard University, Judge Ben Lindsey, Dr.

C. C. Little, Norman Thomas, Dr. Raymond Pearl of Johns Hopkins University, Rabbi Sidney E. Goldstein, David Starr Jordan, Dr. S. Adolphus Knopf, and John Haynes Holmes. Many of these names still stand on our councils. I should like to see these first of the fearless written in bronze and handed down to posterity.

It is as a result of the support that this splendid group of men gave to birth control during those dark early days that the movement has so quickly won for itself a recognized place in social science.

Each year interest has increased, but the growth and development of the cause has meant eternal vigilance and activity. When in New York I hurried to the office at eight o'clock every morning and worked there until seven in the evening. Every night I carried home with me a large folder containing hundreds of problem letters, upon which I'd write the answers for my secretary to type the following day. In this way, we were able to give the very best of our individual selves to work fully for the advancement of the idea.

The workers who helped to build up the movement and who, in harmony and love, put soul and brains and thought into its very structure can never be forgotten. Those staunch and loyal ones include Mrs. Anne Kennedy, Mrs. Juliet B. Rublee, Miss Kitty Marion, Miss Helen Todd, Miss Anna Lifshiz, Mrs. B. P. Smith, Mrs. Lewis L. Delafield, Mrs. Richard Billings, Mrs. Frances B. Ackerman, Mrs. Ida Timme, Mrs. George F. Day, Mrs. Kate Hepburn, Dr. James F. Cooper, and Dr. Hannah Stone, and later Mrs. F. Robertson Jones.

I had set up the League to do educational work on a sound and practical foundation. Its first aim was to carry on such a program by agitation, lectures, letters and debates, and then to organize for legislation. While we were interested in all kinds of legislation as an educational means of furthering our cause, we had left the field of federal legislation clear for the Voluntary Parenthood League, of which the sole function was the revision of federal legislation.

After the Roman Catholic Church had called upon Bishop

Manning in the press to assert his views concerning birth control, I wrote that churchman a long letter begging him, if he should make such a statement, to make it clear where the Protestant Episcopal Church stood on the following points:

1. Shall mothers and fathers either of whom may be known to suffer from transmissible disease be denied knowledge to prevent conception?

2. Shall mothers already suffering from tuberculosis, heart disease, kidney disease, or any other ailment wherein pregnancy endangers the life, be denied information to prevent conception?

3. Shall parents, already having brought subnormal children into the world, continue to be denied knowledge which might prevent further conception of abnormal children?

4. Shall parents who desire to space the births of children in their family, because of the health of the mother, economic stress of the father, or for any other reason consistent with the conscience of the parents and their growing moral responsibility, be denied such scientific knowledge now available to the intelligent and well-to-do classes in this country?

I requested the Bishop to make clear to us all where his church stood on this question as it concerned the health and economic status of parents. No answer to this letter ever came, but Bishop Manning did not voice his opposition to birth control.

It seemed to me then that the whole world was discussing birth control. Even Mexico had a stormy period over the publication of the little pamphlet, "Family Limitation."

The pamphlet had been published by reformers in the Mexican state, Yucatan, and had fallen into the hands of opponents who urged the District Attorney to prosecute. The press took up the question pro and con, and a petition was sent to the Governor of Yucatan requesting official action against the pamphlet. It was refused. The District Attorney then issued a statement in the "Diario Official" of March 14, 1922, which was a classic.

I had already been to Canada and Alaska, leaving nucleus organizations behind me. An invitation from the Mexican Federation of Labor to attend the sixth convention and to speak at Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, on November 17 could not be accepted, owing to my trip to London. That Labor was beginning to look into our question was shown by letters from labor circles requesting speakers and literature.

Universities in America also began to show an interest. In the space of two months students from no less than twenty colleges wrote asking for scientific and historical data upon which to write essays and theses. Lectures were delivered in all the large universities of the eastern states. The Institute of Politics at Williamstown, Massachusetts, had a round table discussion on "Population and Related Problems," in which Professors H. P. Fairchild and E. M. East took part.

The movement covered a broad field. Books, papers, and magazines continued to treat the question in its broader relations to overpopulation, increase of food supply, falling birth rate, child labor, and eugenics. Dr. E. M. East's book, "Mankind at the Crossroads," was published, and circulated among students. Professor Edward Aylsworth Ross's books continued to popularize the sociological and economic aspects. A new literature was taking its place in our social outlook.

There was growing respect for the movement among impartial scientists both here and abroad. Despite the complexity and menacing aspects of the problem it has attacked, despite its limited resources, despite the intellectual inertia of the medical profession and the languid interest of the churches, the movement gradually enlisted the competent cooperation of cool-headed, impartial, and unbiassed scientists; and because of its irrefutable claim for respect, it will continue to do so.

Meantime, our legislative activities continued on their way. In Albany we found a fine young man, Assemblyman Roseman, who was willing to introduce our bill on the floor of the New York Legislation. As we expected, it was killed in the Codes Committee, after a public hearing. In Connecticut and New Jersey a similar bill was also introduced and killed

in committee. In all three hearings the subject was discussed in full and our work was supported by fine speakers whose standing in the community was unquestioned.

With the passing of each year our friends were multiplying by the thousands. In constantly increasing numbers, Roman Catholic women sought our advice. Women of all denominations appealed to me to save them from the cruel slavery of conscripted motherhood. The publication in 1920 and 1922 of my books, "Woman and the New Race" and "The Pivot of Civilization," brought to my desk, in response, hundreds and sometimes thousands of appeals for help every day. The stories of these forsaken women, written in simple, sometimes broken English were so tragic, so desperate that I had to establish a department of trained women to help me reply to them.

But even this was not enough. Sensitive women of my staff, in reading letter after letter every day, were constantly breaking down in health under the nervous depression these letters caused. I myself was keyed up to a high pitch of nervous strain. With never sufficient finances to see a month ahead, with more meetings to attend than I could physically stand, with my own personal health and resources depleted, it was phenomenal that we could exist at all.

One important investigation which had taken place the preceding year was a thorough canvass of the hospitals in New York City by Dr. Mary Halton, aided by a social worker. Two women suffering from tuberculosis and with a 4+ Wassermann reaction were taken to twenty-nine hospitals. In twenty-eight of these, contraceptive instruction was refused them.*

The reports of social agencies, agendas of clubs and women's organizations were constantly upset by the injection of the controversial and hotly discussed subject of birth control. Julia Lathrop's study on infant mortality gave us facts from life which many of us already knew, but here they came at last from a government bureau.

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* Cf. Appendix A, p. 357.

The New York State League of Woman Voters discussed and voted to support the bill at Albany.

At its 26th annual convention, the New York State Federation of Women's Clubs voted 149 to 97 for endorsing favorable legislation in 1920. The Catholic women of Utica opposed this, but to no avail.

The *Pictorial Review, American Medicine,* and many other periodicals kept the subject alive through articles, editorials, and letters.

Through it all I was constantly lecturing. Parlor meetings day after day, open meetings in forums or halls at night, returning home too tired to eat, too excited to sleep. Then I would write out my thoughts in articles or books as they had been stirred or stimulated by questions from the audience. This would often go on until three or four o'clock in the morning; at eight o'clock the telephone would start me off on another day. I look back and wonder at the strength, the endurance, which seemed to come from outside a frail body and a distracted mind.

A new interest was awakening in England as well as in the United States. Important events and distinguished people in Great Britain had helped to awaken public opinion—among them, the Bishop of Birmingham; the Very Reverend Dean Inge of St. Paul's Cathedral; Sir James Barr, Ex-President of the British Medical Association; Dr. C. Killick Millard, Health Officer of Leicester; H. G. Wells; Mr. Harold Cox, ex-member of Parliament, a one-time close friend of King Edward VII, and editor of the *Edinburgh Review.* These and many more were now "speaking out" openly in favor of birth control, giving testimony before the Birth Rate Commission. This commission had been formed through the Royal Geographical Society. It met voluntarily and informally to ascertain the facts on the subject, and eventually brought forth a report.

There had been a decided change in public opinion since my visit in 1914-1915, as I realized on my first visit since the World War, in 1920.

Already could be seen evidences of good results from birth control practices in many sections of London slums. This was especially demonstrated in the region of Rotherhithe, one of the East End's direst slums. Here Miss Ann Martin, a courageous and talented woman, had many years before settled herself to live among the workers. She had early realized the problem of too frequent child-bearing, and had induced Dr. Alice Vickery to come into the neighborhood to instruct the mothers in the best means of contraception. Dr. Vickery had made frequent visits to Miss Martin's home during the ten years previous. How proudly those mothers of small families acknowledged their thanks to Miss Martin for her wisdom and kindness and vision!

During my visit to England in the spring of 1920 I addressed meetings in all parts of London and Scotland. The women's guilds were especially awake to this need. How freely and frankly they responded! How amazingly ignorant they were, these old mothers, mothers of ten and twelve children—ignorant of their bodies, ignorant of any possible beauty in marriage, in love. Yet their worries and problems were the same as those of women in every country. These conscript mothers, as elsewhere, demonstrated an eagerness to know as they awakened to consciousness of their possible power. I longed to forge that latent energy into purposive action; but there was not time to give to this during that visit, as I was booked for many lectures.

I went to Scotland. Glasgow awakened old sleeping memories and reminded me of my visit eight years before. A large mass meeting was arranged for me on the Glasgow Green on July Fourth. What a sight that was! Nearly two thousand men in baggy trousers, caps, and working togs, standing close together, eager to catch every word. What silence, what interest, what an intelligent attitude, demonstrated as by no other group equally large anywhere!—with such comments heard as "she grips ye!"

It was announced that I would speak that evening in a hall rented for the occasion by the Socialists. The hall was packed

to the doors. Women came also. One old-timer arose during the period for discussion and said that this seemed to be a subject that interests the women; that he had been a party member for eleven years, attending regularly the Sunday night lectures, but had never been able to get his wife out to any of them; tonight he couldn't keep her home.

"Look!" he cried, "the women have crowded the men out of this hall tonight. I never saw so many wives of 'comrades' before."

I went out to a town not far from Carnegie's birth place to address a group of dockers, newly recruited from Lancashire mill towns to help out in the World War. I arrived about four o'clock in a driving storm. I had no umbrella, and was not prepared for this storm. No taxi had ever graced the railroad station of that town. We trudged through the rain to the home of one of the most advanced friends of Labour's cause. I was soaking wet. A hurry-call was sent to neighbors and friends for an extra skirt, a pair of shoes—but in that town of five thousand people no one had an extra skirt to lend. Finally I succeeded in getting into a new pair of Sunday shoes. That night I slept in the one bed in the house with my hostess, the husband graciously making his bed on two chairs in the kitchen. Such was the kindness and genuine hospitality of these simple and sincere people. There was not a hotel within miles of the place. I was told that I was given the same accommodation that had been given Sylvia Pankhurst, and I knew we had had the best.

To Germany through that dreary, war-racked Europe I went. I had determined to trace a rumor I had heard in London that there was a new contraceptive, a very special prescription made up into jelly, conveniently dispensed in tubes ready for application. This was the object of my visit to Germany in 1920. I was finally able to trace it from Berlin to Dresden, on to Munich, and at last to Friedrichshafen where the chemist, who was also the proprietor of the compound, was then living. I was impressed by the simplicity of its composition,

and arranged to have a supply sent for a test to New York. This eventually led to the same or a similar jelly being compounded in England and other countries, and it is today one of the methods advised by physicians and sold openly in many drug stores everywhere.

On the surface of things, Germany seemed dead, crushed, broken. One who is sensitive to thought felt at once a terrible sadness in that poverty stricken land. People had forgotten how to smile. Millions of children did not even know how to laugh or play! A grim silence everywhere—for there was little street traffic even in a city the size of Berlin.

When I talked to the Germans, I noticed a slight hope of the future, providing always Labour emerged to power. They were optimistic according as they had a philosophy, a religion, or a cause.

But the women broke down all the reserve of my emotions; they were the sufferers. They had neither faith, hope, philosophy, nor religion. They looked out of eyes dried by suffering, deepened by hunger. They were the real sufferers in defeated Germany. They were resigned to poverty and want for the rest of their lives; resigned to peace or war, love or hatred, a living death or a sudden end—but there was one thing they were not resigned to, and that was to continue to be breeders of children for any State, either militaristic or socialistic! They had gone so far in this that there was even then before the Reichstag a bill removing the penalty for abortion. Another, introduced by the independent Socialists, not quite so radical, aimed to make abortion legal if done before "quickening." Only the Catholic party was opposed to these bills. I visited prominent gynecologists and suggested the use of contraception instead of abortion.

After leaving Germany, I went to Amsterdam to attend the first International Conference on the Technique and Methods of Contraception. Dr. and Mrs. Drysdale joined me there, as did also Dr. Norman Haire, a brilliant young medical practitioner then just feeling his way about in medical circles in London. Dr. Haire is an Australian by birth. He had spe-

cialized in gynecology, and realized early in his career that something must be done about contraception. He had been one of the few medical men in England at that time openly advocating the practice of birth control.

Throughout Europe governments were clamoring for larger populations. France began a system of bonuses for parents who had large families. In Germany, however, the women arose against this tendency, and were then campaigning to change legislation on abortion.

Returning to New York, I was overjoyed to find everywhere a steadily growing interest.

During the spring and summer of 1921 I sent out a questionnaire to the principal and influential leaders in social and professional circles, asking if the time had not come for a national organization which should represent the birth control movement as advanced by the principles promulgated in my books, lectures, and writings. The replies from hundreds of medical officers, social workers, teachers, scientists, and others confirmed me in the opinion that the time had come for organization. I sent out a call to the members of the American Public Health Association, who were to meet at a conference in New York in the autumn. Plans and announcements were made that the first national birth control conference would be held at the Hotel Plaza November 11-13, 1921.

Mr. Harold Cox, one of the leading experts on population questions, was invited to come from London to participate. Mr. J. O. P. Bland was also invited to take part. This brilliant statesman and journalist was familiar with the problems of Asia as were few Occidentals.

We had a magnificent program, with distinguished backers from all walks of life. At last the plan was forming. Of our original program—agitation, education, organization, legislation—the third stage was now to begin.

XVII

TOWN HALL

UPON my return from the Amsterdam Conference on Contraceptive Technique, I plunged at once into tying together the loose ends of our scattered forces. I had an uncanny dread of social organizations; I had held aloof from becoming involved in any of them. There was something heavy and ponderous, something lifeless and soulless in the mechanism of those I had known. Even the women who were able and clever at organization work terrified me with their rule-and-rote minds, their weight-and-measure tactics. They seemed so sure, so certain, so ruthless in their dogmatism. I felt I was in the way of a giant war tractor which destroyed as it went, mercilessly; but that was what it was built for.

In spite of that dread, I reasoned out the necessity for building up public opinion, and together with members of the Conference Committee we formed the American Birth Control League on November 10, 1921, which was later incorporated under the membership laws of the State of New York.

The First American Conference on birth control was well

attended by delegates representing groups in seventeen states. Papers were read by such experts in the fields of medicine and science as Professor A. B. Wolfe, Dr. Abraham Myerson, Dr. Aaron J. Rosanoff, Dr. Roswell H. Johnson, Dr. C. C. Little, Dr. S. Adolphus Knopf, Dr. Lothrop Stoddard, Mr. James Maurer, president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor. These and others presented a dignified and representative opinion of experts qualified to speak on various aspects of the subject. The Medical Session was packed to the doors and hundreds were turned away.

On Sunday, November 13, as a fitting conclusion to the first birth control conference in this country, a mass meeting was arranged at the Town Hall in New York City. The subject chosen for discussion was "Birth Control; Is It Moral?" It was my intention to use this occasion not for agitation, but to sound the opinion of representative men and women of all professional classes. Opponents were invited to present their opinions openly.

The moral question of birth control was at that time constantly debated. Opponents hurled at us the statement that this knowledge would cause immorality among young people; that promiscuity, vice, prostitution would be the inevitable fruits of our efforts. This I did not believe. I knew that morality or immorality is not an external factor in human behavior; essentially it grows, emerges, and comes from within. If the young people of the war aftermath were slipping away from the old moral codes, it was not the fault of birth control knowledge any more than it was the fault of any other progressive or advanced idea of the modern day. Henry Ford's automobiles made transportation available for thousands of young people—morality or immorality as a consequence should not be placed at the door of Mr. Ford.

The moral question as a discussion had great possibilities. Thousands of people had applied for seats in the Town Hall auditorium on Sunday evening where the question was to be debated and the conference was to close. Mr. Cox and I had

dined together at the home of Mrs. Juliet Rublee, and together we drove to the meeting place.

I shall never forget that night. Usually I had been able to visualize my audiences. But all day, try as I would to "tune in" to the evening's events, I could not do it. My dream the preceding night was a memorable one. I was carrying a small baby in my arms up a very steep hill. I came rather abruptly to a side hill which became a mountain side of rock and slippery shale, and I had nothing to hold on to to keep me from slipping. The baby kept crying, and I tried to comfort it, but I dared not use my right hand as it seemed to be held up like a balancing rod which kept us both from falling. That wretched dream kept me drowsy all day—always when I dreamed of babies there was some kind of troublesome news not far away. Another difficulty was that I could not think *through* what I was going to say at that meeting. My brain seemed numb; I felt a strange lack of the worrying anticipation one usually feels previous to a large meeting.

When the car crept along West Forty-Third Street to the Town Hall, we found the thoroughfare swarming with thousands of people. Finally arriving in front of Town Hall, we pushed our way to the door. Two policemen stood before us. The doors were closed, and as Mr. Cox and I attempted to enter we were barred by the arm of the officer.

"You can't get into this place tonight," he announced brusquely.

"Why not?" I asked.

"There ain't going to be no meeting," he replied.

"But who has stopped this meeting?" I questioned. "I am one of the speakers, and this gentleman (Mr. Cox) is another. We wish to be allowed to go inside to find out about it."

"You can't go in, I tell you!" he repeated. "That's all I know about it."

I looked about and saw a cigar-store across the street, and quickly decided to telephone to Police Headquarters. This I did, and I received a reply that no such order to close the hall had been issued from there. Mystery! A meeting of

self-respecting citizens stopped by the police, yet Police Headquarters had given no order to stop it.

Who then *did* give that order? I telephoned to the Mayor to ascertain what he knew about this; but before I could get a reply I noticed that people were coming out of Town Hall. Cautiously they were opening the doors, where two policemen still stood, to let people out, but at the same time they were violently pushing back the crowds vainly trying to get in. At the sight of that open door, I hung up the receiver and dashed across the street and wedged my way in and out of the crowd to the policemen. I waited for the door to open again and at once sprang forward, stooped down under that strong arm, and behold, I was within the hall! Then I hurried—yes, I fairly flew up the aisle to the stage.

Like naughty children being sent to bed, people were standing about reluctant to obey the orders to go home. They were grumbling, and seemed vague about it all. I looked up at the high stage and then at the steps on the side which led to the stage, but as I saw two official-looking men there on guard I decided not to go that way. A tall handsome man stood near me looking vacantly around and much perplexed. A small messenger boy with a large bouquet of pink roses also stood nearby. As I stood looking at that stage and wondering how on earth I could get upon it and call out to the audience to come back, I was suddenly caught up in the strong arms of the handsome man beside me and lifted—no, really flung over the footlights onto the stage. Before I could pick myself up and recapture my poise the same man grabbed the flowers from the messenger with the vacant stare, leaped upon the platform with the quickness and agility of an athlete, and placed the huge bouquet of roses into my arms and called out that I was present to address the meeting.

At that people in the aisles began to sit down and all over the house men and women resumed their seats. Then began such a thundering applause, as if it were the only relief for their angry, indignant, rebellious spirits. The fight was on, and every man and woman in that hall was there beside me

to fight to the finish. I felt it in the air, in their voices, as they called out to me to speak. Mr. Cox was close behind me all the way along. I announced to the audience that the meeting would proceed as quickly as they took their seats and as soon as we could be heard.

While this was going on, I learned from Mrs. Anne Kennedy, our executive secretary, what had occurred. She said that at about seven-thirty, when the hall was half full of people, there appeared several policemen with Capt. Donohue of that district, attended by a man who stated that he was Monsignor Dineen, secretary of the then Archbishop, Patrick J. Hayes of the Roman Catholic Church. He stated that he had orders from the Archbishop to close the doors of that meeting; and Capt. Donohue then issued orders to his men to see that no more people entered.

Mrs. Kennedy, a capable, cool-headed woman of vast experience, calmly protested, but asked Monsignor Dineen to kindly put his order in writing so that she could read it from the platform to the early comers then occupying seats in the hall.

When I saw this statement, I grew hot with indignation. It was one thing to have halls closed by a mistaken or misguided ignorant police captain, but a very different thing to have a high dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church order me to stop talking. I knew the law of the city; I knew the rights of citizens guaranteed under the Constitution. I had been taught by my teachers in American history that the church and state were separate and apart; that we as citizens were guaranteed from interference by powerful church influence. At the thought of this official impertinence, this bullying, this arrogant dictatorship, this insolence of a Roman Catholic Archbishop, my resistance, my resolution become set. I would not close that meeting unless I was forced by arrest to do so. I knew our rights were being violated by the police captain. They must go the limit. Unless I stood my ground and got arrested, I could not take the case into the courts. I decided to stand firm; to hold my ground as long as I had strength in my body to stand upon that platform.

As I stepped to the front of the stage and began to speak, I was checked by another demonstration. Before I could continue, two policemen walked onto the stage, held me, and ordered me not to speak.

"Where's your warrant? What's the charge?" I asked. Confusion reigned.

In a few minutes, the stage was in a tumult. Several women began to address the audience, and as fast as one was silenced by the police another began to speak. Mr. Cox was pushed before the audience and was introduced to the crowd.

"I have come from across the Atlantic—" he began, but the rest of that sentence was lost when several minions of the law came between him and the audience.

The attitude of the police both on the platform and in the hall was if they scarcely knew what it was all about. They seemed to be without official instructions. Back at the far end of the hall stood a medium-sized man in plain attire who seemed to be directing things from that side. Later on, he stood at the back of the platform, leaning against the wings, calmly directing the police by a casual nod of the head or a whisper to one of the men who acted as runner between him and the captain. This man was later identified as Monsignor Joseph P. Dineen, secretary to Archbishop Hayes.

No wonder Police Headquarters knew nothing of the order to close the hall! The Archbishop did not think it necessary to seek advice of the Chief of Police—nor to ascertain the legal rights of non-Catholic citizens and taxpayers of the City of New York.

Confusion and tumult continued for fully an hour. First one woman would attempt to speak; she would be silenced by two or three policemen; then the crowd would boo, roar, hiss, shout, catcall; as that wore down, someone else would attempt to speak only to be instantly silenced by the policemen on the platform. Mary Winsor, that brave and undaunted suffragist, insisted again and again on speaking; but finally, after continuous resistance and a show of determined effort never to give up the attempt to speak at that meeting, the

police captain ordered my arrest and Miss Winsor's. By this time the crowd was in a belligerent and ugly mood—anything might happen.

People now excitedly jumped upon the platform to help me in case of trouble. Men from all classes and of all ages eagerly came forward to see that I was not improperly treated. I have never been afraid of the police, but it was a glorious feeling to see those men behind me with eager, determined faces with jaws set and eyes blazing with indignation—the faces of more than a hundred men citizens of this great metropolis who came forward to protect me.

With a policeman holding each arm, and the captain escorting us to the street, I was led out of the building. No speeches had been made; no laws had been broken except by the policemen who had taken orders from Captain Donohue.

Meanwhile, a call for reserves had been sent out, and the crowd was soon driven out by the police. Miss Winsor followed close behind me.

We were marched through the streets to the station-house, followed by a huge mob. When we reached our destination, the street was blocked by a great crowd of singing humanity. The reserves returned from the hall and tried to clear the street, but they had no success until after we had been driven to Night Court in a patrol wagon. Then the crowd, still singing, booing, and jeering the police, fell into line and marched behind us up Broadway.

The case was put over until the following morning. The next morning I was discharged by Magistrate Corrigan. Police Captain Donohue could not be found.

In the investigation that immediately followed, it was proved by Monsignor Dineen's statement to the press that the raid had been ordered by Cardinal Hayes. A complaint was made to headquarters at the Cardinal's direction some time previous to the meeting, and Monsignor Joseph P. Dineen, his secretary, went to the Town Hall to meet Captain Thomas Donohue before the hour for the meeting. Captain Donohue, it was

later disclosed, did not know why he had been sent to the Town Hall until he met the Monsignor there.

Faced with public censure and challenged by a protest sent to the mayor by a group of prominent citizens, the Monsignor hedged, and attempted to stake new claims of justification.

"I was present from the start. The Archbishop had received an invitation from Mrs. Margaret Sanger to attend the meeting and I went as his representative. The Archbishop is delighted and pleased at the action of the police, as am I, because it was no meeting to be held publicly and without restrictions." Such was the feeble explanation Monsignor Dineen offered in the *Times* of November 15.

"I need not tell you what the attitude of the Catholic Church is toward so-called birth control," he went on. "What particularly aroused me, when I entered the hall, was the presence there of four children. I think any one will admit that a meeting of that character is no place for growing children. Decent and clean-minded people would not discuss a subject such as birth control in public before children or at all," he went on. "The police had been informed in advance of the character of the meeting. They were told that this subject—this plan which attacks the very foundations of human society—was again being dragged before the public in a public hall. The presence of these four children at least was a reason for police action."

The humorous side of the situation, if such a flagrant violation of the principle of freedom of expression can be said to have a humorous aspect, was the fact that these "four children," these immature youngsters who provoked the appearance of two hundred policemen, a patrol wagon, and a front page news story, were four mature Barnard College students with bobbed hair. They were students of Professor Raymond Moley in sociology.

The boomerang effect of this performance was indicated by the reverberation in the press. The idea of birth control was advertised, dramatized, given column after column of free and favorable publicity. Only a small section of the

public had been aware of the first American Birth Control Conference, and even fewer knew of the proposed meeting in the Town Hall. The clumsy and illegal tactics of our religious opponents broadcast to the whole country what we were doing. Even the most conservative American newspapers were placed in the trying position of defending birth control advocates or endorsing a violation of the principle of freedom of speech.

Thus, through the attempted enforcement of medieval dogmas by an official of the Roman Catholic Church, our first national conference was crowned with triumph. Indeed, the momentum of publicity we obtained at this time carried us over many months. Instead of cutting off public discussion of birth control, the episode made the whole country talk about it. There were symposiums, editorials, letters from readers; all of which had the effect deliberately sought by us of keeping our idea before the public at large. Editorials in the New York *Call* and the *New Republic* were thoroughly appreciated, but those intelligent organs of liberal opinion had always supported me. But the editorials in the New York *Evening Post,* the New York *Tribune,* and the New York *Times*—journals in which I had been previously known as "the Sanger woman," or "the well known birth control fanatic," indicated the progress the movement had made.

In an editorial headed "Police Prussianism," strongly condemning the action of the authorities, the *Tribune* said: "The police broke up the meeting without waiting for any expressions of opinion which would warrant repression. They had earlier tried to intimidate the lessor into closing the hall. Their attitude was one of persecution, not of orderly vindication of any local ordinance which might in their opinion be infringed. It was arbitrary and Prussian to the last degree."

The *Evening World* in its editorial declared: "The issue Sunday evening was bigger than the right to advocate birth control. It is part of the eternal fight for free speech, free assembly and democratic government. It is a principle which must always find defenders if democracy is to survive."

Defending his position, Archbishop Hayes issued the following statement through the press:

"As a citizen and a churchman, deeply concerned with the moral well being of our city, I feel it a public duty to protest against the use of the open forum for the propaganda of birth control. This I do in no sectarian spirit, but in the broader one of the common weal.

"My protest is made in the name of ten national organizations of women with a combined membership of nearly a million, as well as in the interest of thousands of other indignant women and distressed mothers, who are alarmed at the daring of the advocates of birth control in bringing out into an open, unrestricted, free meeting a discussion of a subject that simple prudence and decency, if not the spirit of the law, should keep within the walls of a clinic, or only for the ears of the mature and experienced.

"The Federal law excluding birth control literature from the mails and the New York penal law making it unlawful to disseminate information on the subject reflect the will of the people most emphatically. The latter law was enacted under the police power of the Legislature for the benefit of the morals and health of the community . . .

"The law of God and man, science, public policy, human experience, are all condemnatory of birth control as preached by a few irresponsible individuals, without indorsement or approval, as far as I know, of a reputable body of physicians or a medical society, whose province it is to advise the public on such matters.

* * * * * *

"Human experience confirms . . . that, on the average, successive children in a family are stronger up to the fifth or sixth in succession, and that those marked with special genius are very often born after the fifth in the family. The seventh child has been regarded traditionally with some peoples as the most favored by nature. Benjamin

Franklin was the fifteenth child, John Wesley, the eighteenth.

"Ignatius Loyola was the eighth. Catherine of Siena, one of the greatest intellectual women who ever lived, was the twenty-fourth. It has been suggested that one of the reasons for the lack of genius in our day is that we are not getting the ends of the families. Moreover, vital statistics of New South Wales show that mothers of from five to seven children live longest, while Alexander Graham Bell asserts that the greatest longevity occurred in families of ten or more children."

I answered the Archbishop's statement (New York *Tribune,* November 22, 1921):

"I agree with the Archbishop that a clinic is the proper place to give information on birth control. I wish, however, to point out the fact that there are two sides to the subject under consideration—the practical information as distinct from the theoretical discussion. The latter rightly may be discussed on the public platform and in the press, as the Archbishop himself has taken the opportunity to do.

"The object of our work is twofold—to arouse public discussion on the theoretical issue as well as to establish clinics where practical information may be given to mothers through the medical profession.

"The inference is made by him that the genius is born at the end of a large family, usually the eleventh or twelfth, or, as quoted by the Archbishop, the fifteenth child (Franklin). If the Archbishop will recall his Bible history he will find that some of the most remarkable characters were the first children, and often the only child, as well. For instance:

"Isaac, in whose seed all the nations were to be blessed, was an only child, born after long years of preparation. Sarah, his mother, was a beautiful, talented woman, whose counsel was highly valued. Isaac's only children were

THE KAIZO GROUP IN TOKIO IN 1920
Grant, Margaret Sanger, and Baroness Kaizo

KITTY MARION

twins—Jacob, the father of all Israel, and Esau. Isaac's wife, Rebecca, was also a lovely woman of fine character. Joseph, the child of Rachel, was born late in her life, and she had but one other child.

"Samuel, who judged Israel for forty years, was an only child, born after years of prayer and supplication on the part of Hannah. John the Baptist was an only child, and his parents were well along in years when he was born."

One might also add that the leader of Christianity, Jesus Christ himself, is said by Catholic teachings to have been a first and only child.

Later the Archbishop continued: "The Catholic Church's condemnation of birth control, except it be self-control, is based on the natural law, which is the eternal law of God applied to man, and commanding the preservation of moral order and forbidding its disturbances. Therefore the Church has but one possible thing to do, namely, to accept and obey the will of the Supreme Law giver."

Consistency, where art thou? "Self-control is based on natural law" says the prelate. Where? When? How?

Even in face of statements as ridiculously illogical and unlearned as the above, I wish to state here what I have stated again and again: The Catholic Church may teach and preach "self-control," "continence," "abstinence," as the only method of birth control it will tolerate. I, and I speak for non-Catholics, have no objection to the teachings of any church providing it does not inflict its theology upon the rest of the population. I believe also that we have a right to protest against the attempt to intimidate and force through legislative channels their doctrines of morals and to thwart by bullying and coercive measures the right of millions to change our laws consistently with the progress of scientific thought.

Think for a moment of the conditions embodied in modern life if the following statement from Archbishop Hayes' Christmas Pastoral (December 18, 1921) were allowed to dominate our poor civilization: "Children troop down from Heaven be-

cause God wills it. He alone has the right to stay their coming, while he blesses at will some homes with many, others with but few or with none at all. They come in the way ordained by His wisdom. Woe to those who degrade, pervert, or do violence to the law of nature as fixed by the eternal decree of God Himself! Even though some little angels in the flesh, through moral, mental or physical deformity of parents, may appear to human eyes hideous, misshapen, a blot on civilized society, we must not lose sight of this Christian thought that under and within such visible malformation there lives an immortal soul to be saved and glorified for all eternity among the blessed in Heaven.

"Heinous is the sin committed against the creative act of God, who through the marriage contract invites man and woman to cooperate with him in the propagation of the human family. To take life after its inception is a horrible crime; but to prevent human life that the Creator is about to bring into being is satanic. In the first instance, the body is killed, while the soul lives on; in the latter, not only a body but an immortal soul is denied existence in time and in eternity. It has been reserved to our day to see advocated shamelessly the legalizing of such a diabolical thing."

According to the above, an abortion is only horrible, but to deny life is satanic. Why then, I wonder, do priests and nuns remain unmarried? Why then are celibacy and self-control approved and exacted? What a priceless ideal for mothers to follow! To continue bearing children misshapen, deformed, hideous to the eyes, in the hope that Heaven may be filled! It's a monstrous doctrine, abhorrent to every civilized instinct in us. The only comfort I have is to know that the Catholic women themselves have grown out and beyond this medieval doctrine.

Healthy children, happy homes based on consideration of the mother's health and life, on the children's education and the possibilities for their development, on the father's income or wage—these considerations are here today. They are part of Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant mothers' thoughts. They

have come to them through the general rise in our moral responsibility for little lives we have brought into the world.

Let priests and bishops denounce—let the hierarchy roar! They cannot push the chick back into the shell.

XVIII

ARROGANCE IN POWER

IT WAS long after midnight before I left the Night Court after the Town Hall arrest. While we kept repeating to the reporters that Monsignor Dineen had issued orders to the Police captain to stop the meeting, they could not believe it and would not take our statement for it without proof. They were all inclined to make out a story of the stupidity of the police and to let it go at that. But a *Times* reporter telephoned to the Cathedral to verify the statement made by Dineen, and that changed the headlines and increased public indignation everywhere. Even among Catholics themselves there was condemnation of such tactics. Many of our Catholic supporters came personally to see me to say that the Church had made a great blunder.

It was almost impossible to sleep; and when, long after four o'clock, I did fall into a slumber it was only to find myself still carrying that same infant up a steep and sliding mountain.

As soon as our cases had been dismissed by Magistrate Corrigan the following day, I decided to hold another meeting

at the earliest possible date. I was bound and determined, to the last ounce of my strength, to challenge the right of the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church to suppress the rights of American citizens in the freedom of an open discussion. From all over the nation came indignant protests from citizens in all walks of life. The time for action had come. The backs of the citizenry were up and we would not be silenced.

Town Hall could not be had for several weeks. Managers of other halls and theatres were reluctant to get into the battle by renting us a place, but by good fortune I was able to rent the Park Theatre for Friday evening, November 18, a week later. When that evening came, thousands of men and women crowded about the place, unable to enter. Inside, before a packed "house," the subject which should have been discussed at Town Hall—"Birth Control; Is It Moral"—was openly and freely and *decently* discussed by the same people who were to have discussed it at Town Hall. Free speech had its way here under police protection, for our request for police protection against interruption had been granted.

Amidst the crowd outside in Columbus Circle, the Paulist fathers of the Catholic Church were busy giving vent to their views on birth control and distributing pamphlets. We want liberty for our enemy as well as for ourselves. Reason finally must dictate our actions.

Meantime, protests and indignation would not die down. Thinking people began to see the brazen hand of an ecclesiastical order in an attempt to usurp the power of the state. Here in the twentieth century in a nation founded on religious freedom was the first open sign of an encroaching fifteenth century medievalism. Neither Archbishop Hayes nor his secretary, Monsignor Joseph P. Dineen, denied that it was at their direction that Police Captain Thomas Donohue, without warrant or official procedure, had stopped the meeting at Town Hall and arrested the speakers.

The cheap excuse of "protecting children" was too thin for public consumption. No children were in the audience, and, had there been children there, the discussions would have in

no way shocked the most sensitive hearing. This platitudinous, solicitous concern about children's morals was seen to be a screen behind which the Catholic hierarchy was trying to hide from an outraged, critical, and righteously indignant public.

In my first statement to the press I had made our position clear: "My idea of calling the public together was in the belief that this subject could be discussed at the Town Hall with as much dignity and delicacy as it was discussed the last two days at the Hotel Plaza. We were in no way violating the law. I consider my arrest a violation of the first principle of liberty for which America stands, and I shall take this case to the highest courts, if necessary, to preclude the possibility of its ever happening again."

The agitation began to center itself about the Police Department and Commissioner Enright. A demand was made for a public investigation of the cause behind the arrest. Robert McC. Marsh, the attorney for our committee, issued a statement signed by leading citizens in the community demanding that an investigation into the suppression of the meeting by the police be held. Commissioner Enright was said to be out of the city, and Chief Inspector William J. Lahey was given the order for a hearing.

Letters and telegrams from citizens in all parts of the country urged me to institute action in the courts for false arrest, especially against Commissioner Enright and Captain Donohue. The American Civil Liberties Union urged such action, and offered to donate legal services in my behalf. A request by Mr. Albert de Silver of that organization for an investigation was also sent to the Police Commissioner, and accordingly Inspector Lahey announced on November 16th that such an investigation would be held.

Captain Donohue tried to shield the Archbishop from blame, as did the Police Commissioner, by issuing a personal statement that "there was no question in the mind of the police regarding interference with any citizen's right to free speech." He declared "it was not the question of birth control."

"What was it then?"

"It is the question of Mrs. Sanger." Captain Donohue testified before Inspector Lahey that he had been captain in the precinct in which the Amboy Street Clinic was located in 1916, and that he was present at the hearing and heard the policewoman, Mrs. Whitehurst, testify that articles of contraception had been exhibited in that clinic. Consequently, he was justified in closing a meeting of two thousand intelligent, educated and socially minded citizens without a warrant, without official orders, but simply at the command of the secretary of the Archbishop!

None of these excuses, none of these feeble explanations was acceptable to the people, constantly urging the officials to dig out the truth and face it.

The police hearing was set for Tuesday, November 22, at 10 a.m. in the office of Inspector William J. Lahey, at Police Headquarters. It took place in the usual camouflaged manner. All the time of busy citizens summoned to the hearing was taken up to determine whether children were in the Town Hall audience or not. Inspector Lahey conducted the hearing and questioned, not the police who stopped the meeting, not Captaian Donohue, not Monsignor Dineen nor Archbishop Hayes, but his questions were directed to the innocent citizens who had joined in the indignant protest against the outrage. The citizens of New York who demanded that laws and constitutions be obeyed were made the victims of his Star Chamber proceedings.

The investigation was postponed for further evidence until December 2, when another secret hearing was held. At this time Inspector Lahey was assisted by Assistant Corporation Counsel Martin Dolphin, who sat beside Mr. Lahey coaching him as to questions to ask. When I was called to testify before Lahey, who sat at the head of a long table on my right, Dolphin sat exactly opposite the witness chair. His large head, his dull, heavy features with full, hanging lips, and coarse mouth and jaws, loomed before me. His eyes were fixed straight on my face as if he intended to hypnotize me

and influence by sheer terror what I was to say. His head was so still, his features and eyes so set, his expression so immobile that I felt a sinister animus. I refused to look his way, but turned my head toward Lahey and continued to address my remarks to him. I did not know this man's (Dolphin's) name at the time, and at first he gave the impression that he was a priest, but later examination of his dress proved this impression was wrong.

The occasion was used as a means of asking questions irrelevant and out of order, but framed to embarrass and confuse the witnesses. It was a brutal effort at persecution. I was the first witness called to testify. The questions asked of me had nothing to do with the Town Hall meeting; they were directed against the Brownsville Clinic and my arrest at that time. Every attempt was made to trip me in replies and to discredit and confuse the issue. I was amused at the tactics used by Lahey to embarrass me when he asked something about the arrest made, and I denied emphatically the truth of a certain statement.

"Do you mean to say, Mrs. Sanger, that this statement of the police officer as written into the records of your arrest in Brownsville was untrue?"

"I do," I replied.

"Do you say then that the woman who testified to that statement lied?"

"I do."

At that reply Mr. Lahey lifted an official finger to an attendant behind him. The door from an anteroom opened, and a woman in smart street costume stood dramatically before us. "Mrs. Sanger," said Mr. Lahey, "do you recognize this woman?"

"Yes, she is the woman who made the arrest in Brownsville," I replied.

"Do you say that if she made the statement referred to in the police records she lied?"

"She most certainly lied," I said calmly. The woman was then dismissed. This was perhaps the first time in all my life

that I had ever told a human being, face to face, that she lied. It was an interesting experience. This was a quaint procedure of inflicting upon the innocent the third degree!

After I had been spiritually battered about in the chamber of abuse and insult for nearly an hour, in which every effort to degrade, to insult, and accuse by inference was made in order to break down my conviction, courage and morale, I felt physically bruised, as though parts of my body had been beaten black and blue.

Mrs. Juliet Rublee was then called to the chair to testify. Mrs. Rublee had been one of the most prominent and active women in social circles, and had brought many distinguished professional and literary men and women into the movement. More than to any other single individual credit is due to her for making the idea of birth control acceptable in professional and conservative circles. Mrs. Rublee had opened her home time and again to meetings for the cause. She had replied to Archbishop Hayes' statement in the press. Consequently the assistant corporation counsel, Martin Dolphin, kept his inquisitorial and vicious eyes constantly upon her. His malicious countenance, his pale, expressionless face like a death mask, stood out of his black frock in such contrast that this figure, together with the atmosphere created by the brutal crudeness of the questioners, seemed to exude the satanic, sulphurous ectoplasm of the inferno.

Dolphin now took charge of the questioning: "Do you know Mrs. Sanger?" "How long?" "Did you ever read the law, Section 1142?" To this Mrs. Rublee (a lawyer's wife) replied that she had read it.

"When?" was the retort.

"Yesterday, with Mr. Marsh," she replied.

"Did you ever read it before?" asked Dolphin.

"Yes, about five years ago, with Mrs. Sanger."

"Arrest that woman!" shouted the inquisitor to a patrolman, T. J. Murphy, who stepped up to Mrs. Rublee and placed her under arrest. The room was now tense with an unknown ter-

ror. This unexpected, false, unwarranted arrest of a gentle, tender and sensitive woman electrified us all with horror.

For a few seconds, which seemed longer, there was a dead silence which was broken by the prompt action of our counsel, Mr. Marsh, who arose and asked, "Who makes the charge against Mrs. Rublee?"

Dead silence! no reply while Dolphin, Murphy and Lahey whispered together over papers. Finally, when Mr. Marsh repeated his question, Murphy replied, "I do." Mr. Marsh then turned to Dolphin, who was instructing Murphy and whom we had heard order the arrest, and said, "My brother of the bar, will you give me your name?"

No reply from Dolphin. The sinister secrecy of his personality was appalling. Mr. Marsh continued, "At least it is a courtesy between attorneys to know by name those with whom we are dealing."

"I am merely a bystander," said Dolphin.

"Then, Mr. Bystander," insisted Mr. Marsh, "will you be specific and say what is the charge this woman is arrested upon?"

Dolphin, now becoming enraged, shouted out in a threatening voice to Mr. Marsh, "Say, do you want to get into this? If you do now is the time to say so."

Doubtless Mr. Marsh knew more of the possibility of that menacing tone than I did. I stood in silent amazement at such high-handed power in the hands of a "bystander" without a name. I was disappointed that Mr. Marsh did not accept his challenge "to get into this." I longed with every heartbeat in me to hear our counsel reply, "Yes, Mr. Bystander, if defending an innocent woman under the constitution of the United States of Ameria is getting into this, *then I want to get into it!*"

Mr. Marsh did not make this reply, though he held his own dignity and that of his clients marvelously throughout. His upright, principled bearing severed him from fraternizing with our persecutors, and he was a "marked man," as the next hearing proved.

Mrs. Rublee was arraigned before Magistrate Hatting in the Elizabeth Street Court. Papers had not been drawn, and not until 4 o'clock in the afternoon were we able to find out why she had been arrested. It was another case of dismissal. As soon as the Magistrate heard the testimony, which was that Mrs. Rublee had testified that she had *read* the law, he dismissed the case after ten minutes' hearing. Even a magistrate knew it was no crime to read the law, though an assistant corporation counsel used this as an excuse to bully and frighten women in retaliation for their having sought an investigation of illegal arrests. Mrs. Rublee at once retained the services of Mr. Paul D. Cravath to take whatever action seemed necessary against the Police Department for false arrest.

Mayor Hylan was now requested to make a full, immediate and public investigation not only of the Town Hall meeting outrage, but of Mrs. Rublee's arrest. Ten prominent men, distinguished for their public spirit in the city addressed a letter to the mayor. They were Paul D. Cravath, Lewis L. Delafield, Charles C. Burlingham, Samuel H. Ordway, Pierre Jay, Paul M. Warburg, Charles Strauss, Montgomery Hare, Henry Morgenthau and Herbert L. Satterlee. The signed letter read as follows:

"You doubtless are already acquainted with the fact that on the evening of November 13, police of the 26th Precinct, acting, we understand, under the direct command of Captain Thomas Donohue, forcibly closed a public meeting which had gathered at the Town Hall, 121 West Forty-third Street, for an oral discussion of a question of public policy and of morals.

"We are advised that without any warrant or legal authority justifying his action, Captain Donohue arrested two ladies, and in spite of their protests caused them to be taken to the police station, and thence to the magistrate's court where they were discharged.

"A second offense was even more flagrant. It occurred on December 2, in the unjustifiable and inexcusable arrest

of Mrs. Juliet Barrett Rublee, after she had testified as a witness before Inspector Lahey in an inquiry into the action of the Police Department in connection with the Town Hall meeting. Mrs. Rublee was arrested by Patrolman Thomas Murphy by the direction, we are informed, of Assistant Corporation Counsel Martin Dolphin, who was present as Inspector Lahey's adviser.

"The arrest of Mrs. Rublee was so completely without justification or excuse that the Assistant District Attorney acknowledged in open court having no evidence to support a charge of any kind, and Magistrate Hatting promptly released Mrs. Rublee.

"The action of the Police Department above referred to constitutes such a wilful violation of the right of free speech as to cause grave alarm to the citizens of New York, who have a right to know why such outrages have taken place, what motives and influences are behind them and whether any conspiracy exists in the Police Department to deny the right of free speech and the equal protection of the law to citizens of New York. This obviously is a matter of the gravest concern.

"We, therefore, ask an immediate and full investigation of the action of the Police Department in the premises, to be followed, if the evidence warrants, by such disciplinary measures against the officials found to be guilty as will discourage similar offenses hereafter."

The mayor referred the matter to Commissioner of Accounts David F. Hirschfield for investigation and report. Mr. Hirschfield stated that he had been given "a free hand" and directed to be "thorough" in an effort to establish the motives behind the police action and to prove there was no "conspiracy" on the part of the police to restrict freedom of speech.

The press both in its news and editorial columns kept up a rapid-fire attack on the clumsiness of the Police Department and the abuse of their power. The *Evening World* in an editorial exclaimed:

"The effort to muzzle the birth control propagandists is as stupid an attempt at obstruction as ever helped a minority movement.

"It is a puzzle how anyone can imagine that police abuses, star-chamber sessions, inquisitorial investigations, false arrests, farcical persecutions, dummy complaints and quick releases when the proceedings come out into open court, will suppress the birth control advocates . . .

"The stupidity of the Town Hall proceedings was bad enough; the result of this interference was that the meeting at Park Theater was so well advertised that crowds were turned away . . .

"Even this lesson was lost. Acting through the clumsy machinations of the police, the same opposing influence undertook to revive the Inquisition . . .

"The score today is all in favor of the birth control advocates—not because of the excellence of their case, but because of the sheer stupidity of the opposition. What will be the next move?"

Commissioner Hirschfield's first hearing was set for January 24. The "free hand" given to the commissioner was used to throw dust into the eyes of the public, in diverting the inquiry into a discussion of the merits of birth control instead of dealing with the outrages of the police. The records of that hearing show an attempt at facetious remarks bordering on silliness. The reference to "old, bald headed men" at the Town Hall meeting, the inference that Emma Goldman had been deported for speaking on birth control, the confusion of abortion with birth control all indicated the lack of knowledge the commissioner had on the subject,—and consequently his tactics in acting the buffoon.

The public, fortunately, was not to be confused by this trick of New York's clownish commissioner. The cheap chicanery of this latest farce was exposed; and when Hirschfield felt his tricks were detected, he banged his gavel on the table interrupting witnesses, shrieked that he had been "insulted"

and in a temper and a huff refused to continue the "investigation" with our attorney, Mr. Marsh.

A second hearing was called for February 2. Mr. Cravath and Mr. Emory R. Buckner took up the defense in Mr. Marsh's place. Again a further postponement, to February 17. At this third hearing Capt. Donohue, Thomas Murphy, Inspector Lahey, and both District Attorneys Gibbs and Wilson were placed on the stand. All evidence brought out from examining these witnesses proved conclusively and unmistakably that all three women arrested, Mrs. Rublee, Mary Winsor and myself, were innocent of any crime and that our arrests were unwarrantable; also that there was no legal justification for breaking up the Town Hall meeting. Assistant Corporation Counsel Dolphin was not present and could not be found, nor did he deign to respond to the legal summons all officials had received to attend the hearing!

The *New Republic* called the whole proceeding "useless highhandedness," and said: "What redress has the victim of such false arrest? Very little. A suit for damages would not come up for trial for a year or more. . . No sense of decency seems to restrain the police from arbitrary arrests, and the law as it stands is too feeble to act as a deterrent. Obviously, one remedy is legislation providing swifter justice and a greater penalty for false arrest. Here is a matter which is well worth investigating by the New York Bar Association." Thus we had the matter in a nutshell. Our attorneys had given facts to the commissioner to show that certain police officers and an assistant corporation counsel had with animosity and vindictiveness violated the civic rights of citizens and illegally caused their arrest. From the Mayor down, city officials were literally "thumbing the nose" at its taxpayers; and the hierarchy at St. Patrick's Cathedral were smugly complacent, knowing that though somewhat dulled, the tools of a city government were still in their hands.

The fight for the right to discuss the subject of birth control was an issue totally different from that of its practice. The right of citizens to decently discuss this question was

to be fought for by the people themselves. It involved principles of democracy, liberty and education. It was no longer my lone fight. It was now a battle of a republic against the machinations of the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. By this time I had already set sail for Japan, leaving the cause of free speech and assembly in the courts to stifle and choke with legal verbiage and technicalities.

XIX

JAPAN

ONE day in 1920 I had received a visit from a beautiful, intelligent young Japanese woman, the Baroness Shidzue Ishimoto, wife of Baron Keikichi Ishimoto, whose father had been Minister of War during the Russo-Japanese conflict. I gave a tea for the Baroness, and naturally the talk came of a visit to the Orient. It seemed at that time a remote possibility; but before the end of the year an invitation had come from the *Kaizo* group. This group of liberal intellectuals, representing young Japan, published a radical monthly called *Reconstruction,* in which four of my articles on birth control had appeared. It aimed to bring to the attention of the young generation in Japan the most challenging, significant thought of our Occidental world.

The *Kaizo* organization had planned to have four representatives of European and American thought lecture to their countrymen. The first was Bertrand Russell, who delivered a series of lectures on reconstruction from the philosophical angle. The second, I am proud to say, was myself, the third,

Albert Einstein and the fourth H. G. Wells, who unfortunately did not make the trip.

Japan's interest in birth control was based on more powerful factors than curiosity. The problem of overpopulation was yearly becoming more acute. The older, conservative, militaristic, nationalist group advocated a larger population. The younger, liberal, educated group, many of whom had traveled and attended Occidental universities, expounded a cultured, peaceful future for Japan. The subject of birth control was grasped at as one very potent means of solving the population problem of the future. My articles in the Japanese monthly, *Reconstruction,* had aroused intense interest and discussion on the subject in radical as well as liberal circles.

It had been arranged that I should go to the Orient in March, 1922. It was not an easy thing for me to leave the battleground of my country, where the Town Hall episode was still in the air, to take the subject to the Orient. If all the arrangements for my going had not been made long before, I should have postponed the trip to another year. This was not now possible.

Owing to the excitement caused by the various reactions to the Town Hall raid, I neglected to apply early enough for my passport. Accordingly, at the last minute, so to speak, I sent in my application. I was told in New York that it had best be sent directly to me in San Francisco.

Besides the Ishimotos there were many leaders of thought and public opinion in the Japanese Empire already seeking facts and statistics as proving arguments in defense of their stand for birth control. Mr. Suzuki, a prominent labor leader, Professor Isa Abe, a sociologist of Tokyo University, Dr. Kato, head of the Department of Medical Affairs, who came to this country to study the birth control movement, were only a few of those who were convinced that the government must solve her population problem through general practice and properly directed means of birth control.

The month of January, 1922, preceding my departure for the Orient was one of almost hectic excitement. As I look

back over those years and see my almost single-handed work and activities it seems simply phenomenal. The Town Hall hearings were being arranged and postponed, newspaper interviews had to be granted almost daily, thousands of letters had to be replied to, and besides these activities my departure for Japan was the means of gathering together new people at farewell dinners and luncheons and capturing their interest.

At last we arrived in San Francisco, with a happy heart but humble spirit, for I felt that the task before me was stupendous, and, as always, I was torn with doubts and misgivings as to my ability to do it well. To take the message of Birth Control to Japan was a great honor, but it was also a tremendous responsibility.

Then came the shock. Much to my surprise, when, with my thirteen-year-old son Grant, I applied for a visa to the Japanese Consul, we were told, with many apologies, that the Imperial Government had cabled directions to refuse me admission.

I felt the exhilarating flush that the prospect of a battle always starts in me. I asked the consul to ascertain the government's stand on my coming to Japan, not to lecture on birth control, but as an individual. The answer came back. It was the polysyllabic Japanese equivalent for our abrupt "no." Even a promise of public silence on the dread doctrines was not sufficient to satisfy the authorities.

Past experience had taught me that when there is an autocratic and arbitrary screen placed between birth control and the people there is a keen interest and desire for knowledge behind it.

I knew that official opposition was the greatest stimulus to popular interest. I knew also, from the scores of Japanese friends with whom I had spoken, that the people of Japan were vitally interested in the idea. I resented this peremptory and baseless interference. I decided to fight this battle with the Imperial Government with the most subtle of all weapons, diplomacy.

The steamship company cancelled my passage because my

passport had not been visaed by the Japanese Consul. I went to the office of the Chinese consul and applied for a visa to Shanghai. It was granted without any hesitation. I returned to the steamship company, secured passage for Shanghai, obtained the same stateroom I had previously booked, and sailed from San Francisco on the day I had originally planned. The steamer was to stop at Japan on the way.

Aboard the boat, the *Taiyo Maru,* I discovered as fellow passengers more than 150 Japanese returning from the Washington Peace Conference, including the two delegates, Admiral Baron Kato, later Prime Minister of Japan, and Mr. Masanao Hanihara, who at that time was vice-minister of foreign affairs. These distinguished Japanese were ever friendly and helpful, as people of sincerity and wide culture always are.

Mr. Ulrick Thompson had arranged a meeting in Honolulu. We landed there at one in the afternoon, and were to sail at five. The lecture had been arranged for two. I was met at the dock by Mr. and Mrs. Dillingham and taken to their Waikiki home—of magic beauty—for a hurried lunch. Immediately afterwards we drove over to the Lester Dancing Academy, where five hundred chairs had been placed to accommodate the audience. We arrived to find every bit of space filled by the crowd, and the windows crowded with interesting, alert faces. Judge Sanford B. Dole, known as "the good old man of the Blessed Isles," took the chair and introduced me to the enthusiastic, picturesque audience. I spoke for an hour, and was received with great enthusiasm, which was as keen among the Japanese as among the American residents. Then we were rushed out to the Country Club for tea, and I was questioned further. Two Japanese editors carried on their questioning as we sped back to the boat. Duriny my few hours stay the nucleus of a Hawaiian Birth Control League was formed.

This warm-hearted demonstration in Honolulu reacted favorably upon the pessengers on the *Taiyo Maru.* During the next two weeks everyone seemed to be discussing the question of birth control. They crowded into my cabin to ask questions.

Finally, I was invited to address the Japanese delegation. Admiral Kato and Mr. Hanihara attended. The feelings of my own countrymen were hurt because they were not invited; so I had to speak to them also.

My arguments fell on fertile soil. Mr. Hanihara sent a radiogram to his government stating that, in his opinion, the subject of birth control, as he had heard it expounded, was in no way offensive to public morals. He recommended that his government lift the ban, permit me to enter Japan, and allow the free discussion of this problem.

To the observer of the trend of affairs in Japan perhaps the most significant phase of the dispute over my admission was the number of times official decisions concerning it were reversed. It is probable that if I had essayed to make speeches on birth control ten years before this time the announcement would simply have been that I could not enter and that there the matter would have ended.

Now the procedure was a little different. Days before my arrival it was announced in Japan that I could not land. Immediately, like a deluge of hornets, came pouring down on the heads of the officials the protests of the younger men in the Home and Foreign offices. Editorials appeared regretting the high-handed procedure. Foreign papers were frankly critical.

The storm continued to brew, and it was finally announced unofficially that I might land if I would promise to conduct myself with proper dignity and not to talk while I was in Japan. Still further protests!

Oh, very well then, I might talk, but not publicly, and under no conditions concerning birth control. Continued derision on the part of the press was added to the vociferous objections of Young Japan.

All right! I might speak publicly if I wished, but not on the subject of birth control. One report one day, and another the next. There was nothing to do but to have patience and wait.

Two days before landing I began to receive radio messages

from Japan. One read: "Thousands disciples welcome you"; another: "Possible land Yokohama, welcome discourse." The following day, however, this was amended to "Possible land Yokohama, impossible discourse." Radio messages from all kinds of organizations asked me to lecture: from the medical associations of Kyoto; the Cultural Society of Kobe; a commercial group in Tokyo; and an industrial group of Yokohama. I received an aerial greeting from the doctors of Nagoya and another from the Young Men's Christian Association of Tokyo. And still I had not been definitely assured that I would be permitted to land! At any rate, it was some satisfaction to know that the opposition of the government had aroused the Japanese press and public to a discussion of birth control. For experience had taught me that once people begin to discuss birth control seriously the battle is half won.

That was how things stood when we arrived at Yokohama harbor on the tenth of March. As the *Taiyo Maru* entered the bay, she was surrounded by a fleet of small craft. Government officials, health officials, representatives of the police department, and a large number of newspaper men and cameramen flocked on board. I learned later that no less than seventy permits to board the *Taiyo Maru* had been issued to the representatives of the press to interview me on birth control. Then I had to submit to the severest test and strain of my journey.

For three hours I was closeted with a government official, an interpreter, and a stenographer. At the end of that time the official agreed to remove the ban if the American consulate general in Japan would make a formal request to permit me to land.

I had sent already, by radio, a message to the American consul asking him, as an American, to use his power in this direction. I told him that I wished to visit Japan, if not as a propagandist, at least as a private citizen. Now, after this conference, I rushed off another cable telling him how he could aid me.

I waited for the reply of our American consul. It did not

come. Not only did the representative of my government refuse to make a formal request for my admission, but he did not even show me the courtesy of a reply to either of my messages. He was in a "blue funk" all the time I was in Japan—that silent, unhelpful, fearful, ungracious, representative of our democracy!

At seven-thirty that evening, without the sponsorship of the agitated American consul, but due to great popular pressure and protest, it was as an individual that the Imperial Government at last opened its gates to me.

The final ordeal was to undergo the inspection of the customs officials. After having most of my books confiscated, I was allowed to land. A graphic description of that victory was given in the Japan *Times* the following day:

> Mrs. Sanger was allowed to land in this country last night after a series of negotiations that made the diplomacy of the Washington Conference look like child's play. She will remain here for some time, and hopes to have an opportunity of discussing, with doctors at least, her theories on birth control. But she has promised the police that she will "be good" and make no attempt to deliver any public addresses on the subject.
>
> When the *Taiyo* arrived at quarantine, she was surrounded by a fleet of small craft: police launches, tenders of the *Toyo Kisen Kaisha* service, health officers' boats, government vessels, mail tenders and press dispatch carriers. After the police and health officers had finished their official duties, the reporters were allowed to board the ship.
>
> An army of star writers from Tokyo—the authorities said that they issued seventy passes to these men alone—a dozen regular waterfront reporters, and a few foreign correspondents swarmed up the gangway of the ship, which bore nearly three hundred distinguished persons as first cabin passengers, including two Japanese delegates

to the Washington Conference and members of their suite.

The eager news men rushed up the gangway and scurried about in search of a notable news story. Was it Admiral Baron Kato they sought? It was not. A dozen disgruntled shorthand men dropped out of the herd to take notes on the Envoy's address in the dining-room, but the others flocked onward until they found the modest quarters wherein abode a modest little American woman and her handsome young son. Mrs. Sanger and the Cause of Birth Control were what the press of Japan was interested in—the Peace Conference was an old story.

Mrs. Sanger was surprised and pleased by the intelligent questions that were asked about her mission. She answered each interrogator simply, comprehensively and with admirable patience.

Free at last from the customs inquisitor, I was approached by several rickshaw men who had come as representatives of the Rickshaw Men's Union to welcome me to Japan. One, who spoke a little English, courteously apologized for the unwarranted action of the Home Office. "You do not mind," he said, "Sometime Japanese Government he little autocratic." I did not mind. In fact, I almost felt at home. Comstock, though dead, maintains an equally autocratic rule in America to which the public bows and grovels. We dare not lift our heads at home, so it befits us to take orders abroad humbly.

If it had been the object of the Imperial Japanese Government to focus interest upon birth control and to give world-wide publicity to my activities, it could have chosen no more effective tactics. First it had refused to visa my passport; then it had permitted me to come to Japan on the condition of my refraining from speaking on birth control. Each step of my visit was followed by the American and the Oriental press. The newspapers of Great Britain carried the news. The action of the Japanese government was to whet interest in the forbid-

den doctrine throughout the world. It was another case of successful dramatization, and in this I had not been the instigator. I had had no publicity expert, but the results were far more gratifying.

The next five days were filled with breathless activity. Five days after landing I wrote home: "March 10, Yokohama. Allowed to land in Japan. Hundreds crowded to welcome the birth control advocate. Beautiful and fascinating women; a different people; a strange language, a new world! I love it! I am just as busy here as I was in New York. Japan is full to overflowing with interest in birth control. The protests against the authorities for trying to keep me out were so serious that they had to let me enter. The common people were as vigorous in their protests as some of the delegates on the boat. I have spent many hours discussing the subject with police officials and government authorities (tea is always served), and yesterday I gave a public lecture here in the Y. M. C. A. hall. My days and evenings are crowded with lecture and reception dates. Every evening, afternoon, dinner, lunch and morning taken until I leave Tokyo! I am now beginning to fill breakfast engagements. Japan has been put over, there is no doubt. Now for China!"

The lecture at the Y. M. C. A. was on "War and Population." The audience was made up of prosperous-looking business men, well-groomed women, a Buddhist priest or two, a number of foreigners, and a battery of camera men, not to mention a liberal sprinkling of plain-clothes men of the Metropolitan Police, who were sent to see that I did not overstep the permitted bounds, birth control being a subject "dangerous to Japanese morals."

No more interesting—nor interested—audience could I have hoped for. Most of those present understood English, as was shown by their enthusiastic response and their ability to understand the tacit implications of my point of view. They were silently expectant. A strange experience truly, to find myself here in the heart of the Orient expressing my innermost thoughts to a group of Orientals as responsive, as sensitive

to my reasoning as members of my own family. The usual stir came as the interpreter started to translate each paragraph of my discourse, and gazing out at the audience I discovered that most of them had understood my own words. Out of that vast audience my interest was arrested by two pathetic women of the poorer class, aged beyond their years by the bearing and rearing of many children. Each was compelled to pace the aisles and to croon to a fretful baby on her back.

But I was soon to discover that, among the lower classes at any rate, it was apparently an old Nipponese custom to carry a baby on the back. Throughout Japan I was amazed at the thousands of children I saw,—children carrying children on their backs, most of the women doing likewise, and men, old and young, doing the same thing. Everyone carried these happy, smiling youngsters—though few, I must admit, took the trouble to wipe their little noses! I never saw any of them strike or slap a child. Seldom did one hear a child weeping. The young boys carried the babies; even in their play the infants stayed on their backs, and in any traffic danger the baby was always the first concern. I found that the children of Kyoto were noticeably happier and freer than those of Tokyo. They waved and called out to us foreigners and in no way were they self-conscious or spoiled. All day, I noticed, they played in the streets.

Baron and Baroness Ishimoto had arranged a welcome dinner and reception for me at the Imperial Hotel, constructed, if I have not been misinformed, by that great American architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. The dinner was attended by approximately one hundred and fifty representative Japanese, the majority of them men. They came from the Home Office, the welfare departments, the hospitals. Physicians, specialists, journalists and writers attended. The proprietor of the hotel donated a half of the proceeds for the support of the movement in Japan. A study group was formed as the result of the enthusiasm there manifest.

Baron Ishimoto interpreted. The translation of my remarks on the morality of birth control seemed to take a very long

time, and I was soon fatigued by the necessity of remaining on my feet for so long. Most of those present understood English. They laughed at the proper places! Strangely enough, it is the moral aspect of contraception that concerns the Japanese, though we all know that their *mores* have been very different from ours of the Occidental world. Would not birth control corrupt the morals of the young? This was the question most often repeated.

That question re-echoed in my mind in visiting the famous Yoshiwara whither I was escorted by the Baron and Mr. and Mrs. Coleman. First we visited the so-called unlicensed quarters. It consists of avenues of small two-story houses. There are alcoves where the girls sit behind a screen with only a slit for their eyes to be seen. There seem to be literally thousands of these girls in the unlicensed quarter. The streets were filled with men walking up and down, occasionally stopping to scrutinize the price of the girl, which was posted before the door like a restaurant menu—the price per hour, per night!

After walking for half an hour in this quarter we crossed a bridge to the licensed quarter. There we seemed to enter another world. The houses were like large hotels. Their electrically lighted lanterns sent out a soft, glamorous glow. The wide thoroughfares were clean and inviting. There was an air of spaciousness, of luxury about the amply-built houses. There were courts with carefully cultivated gardens, a profusion of flowers. Through entrances as spacious as driveways the men, far better dressed than in the poor, unlicensed quarter, strolled up to the entrances of the houses to view the photographs of the inmates, framed and not unlike those in the lobby of a Broadway theatre. In some frames there were no pictures—only the announcement "Just arrived—No time for photograph"—tempting bait for those seeking their illicit pleasure. The new girl, I was told, was most in favor with the clients, most of whom did a good deal of what we would call "window shopping." It seems that the new girl, freshly arrived from the country, might have eight or nine visitors an evening, while the older ones would receive but two or three.

At twenty the Geisha girls are already veterans, ready to retire from active service in their strange profession.

I was amazed that the Yoshiwara seemed the most up-to-date and attractive section I had seen. Small wonder that the girls preferred to live there rather than to seek a living in the dismal factories or to endure the squalor, poverty and hunger of the poorer quarters.

There were fewer men wandering silently about than in the unlicensed quarter. To me it was a depressing spectacle despite all its artificial glamor. It made me think deeply. It made me feel almost helpless against that crowd of men swarming almost like insects automatically reacting to the stimulus of instinct. They least of all want conditions to be changed. Physical pleasure is relieved of responsibility. My Japanese friends told me that the women of the Yoshiwara seldom if ever have children. It is said that there is a hospital conducted in connection with the quarter where an occasional child is born, but I was unable to substantiate that report.

The enduring impression I carried away from Japan was that the old order had been swept away by modern industrialism. The cherry-blossom fairyland of the familiar Japanese print has been destroyed by the advent of industrial machinery. In Yokohama and Kobe one hears factory whistles and sees the tall smokestacks of industrial plants. There are tall cranes in new shipyards.

The industrial revolution, which began about sixty years before, has penetrated even into the smaller villages. The World War quickened this transformation of Japanese society and is making great changes in the lives of the working millions.

This industrial change has not been a gradual one. It has come suddenly. Without warning, Japan was thrust from a feudal system into an industrial system not unlike our own. The Japanese people have had no background of understanding or experience upon which to meet the new conditions. The factory system has been imposed on a complete feudal society unprepared to accept it. The masses of the people,

mostly peasants, have been ruled by feudal loyalty, by clan and guild orders, by a religion of personal submission, by century-old superstitions, and by racial prejudice. Under the old order the power of money played an inconsequential part in the scheme of society. When money triumphs, beauty fades away.

There is evident everywhere the increasing social unrest that goes with the machine age. From seventy to seventy-five percent of the factory workers are women. These women factory workers are sent out of the rural districts and contracted—that is, practically sold—for two or three years.

All factory laws were thrown into abeyance by the abnormal conditions resulting from the World War. I visited a plant at Nagoya where I found over seven hundred young girls working. Tragedy was stamped on many of their faces. I was told that during the rush season their work began at five in the morning and did not end until half past seven in the evening. I went through a silk-spinning mill and saw many little girls, some no more than ten years of age, swiftly twirling off the slender threads from the cocoons and catching them on the spindles. They were pathetic, gentle, hopeless, little things, doomed to a life of toil. From six in the morning until five at night, with all windows closed to keep the room moist and hot, they worked; and then—dinner, a bath, and bed, to get up for the next day's grinding toil. They got two Sundays a month off, and received about seven dollars a month compensation, of which one and a half went for board.

In the cotton mills conditions were even worse. I was invited to visit the Kanegafuchi plant, the largest cotton mill in the Empire. I spent half a day there as guest of the directors. There I found beautiful gardens, playgrounds, an emergency hospital, rest rooms, baths, and the most advanced sanitation. This type of paternalistic welfare work, splendid as it appears to the casual visitor, who might be disarmed by the extreme courtesy of his hosts, is at best a palliative, a compensatory effort to divert attention from those

young women and girls who, with weary manner and sleepy eyes, toil at the spindles, many of them far into the night. In the average Japanese cotton mill the working shift was twelve hours. Dust and fine particles of fabric fall like minute snowflakes upon the toilers while the machines roar their monotonous accompaniment, taking their dreadful toll of health and happiness everywhere.

Modern Japanese industrialism has been able to take advantage of an ancient habit of thought which places little value on the girl child. Nevertheless, today, as their economic value increases, these girls and women are undergoing the cruel education of modern industry. They are no longer slaves to custom and tradition. They are learning to look squarely at the problems of readjustment.

While the actual density of population is no higher in Japan than in other countries, the density in tillable areas averages two thousand human beings to the square mile. Every available square inch of the country is under the most intense cultivation. There are few playgrounds, no lawns and fields in which children can properly play. I never saw so many children in any country. While you see a country of one-story houses, you also see a country of *two-story children.*

Such is the situation in Japan: a rapidly increasing population and a dearth of tillable land. The percentage of land under cultivation to the entire area in Japan is 13.2, compared to over 50% in Germany and France. She is dependent more and more upon imports for food and clothing. She may increase her shipping and foreign trade, but without birth control she cannot keep pace with her growing population.

With a surplus population daily growing more pressing, the great popular interest among the Japanese in birth control is not to be wondered at. By questioning my Japanese friends I found out that the news of my coming had divided opinions into two main currents. A bill had been introduced in Parliament called "Dangerous Thought Bill." It was presented by a group of reactionaries, called "Thought Controllers."

They aimed to exclude from the country all thoughts and ideas which did not conform to ancient Japanese tradition.

Then I found out that a rumor had spread throughout the country that I was a secret agent of the American nation sent by the United States Government to deplete the population of Japan and to prepare the way for an American invasion!

It is amusing to observe the similarity between the opposition in Japan and America. In the papers and magazines of Japan were the same attacks and objections which had been agitated in America for the past ten years. One maiden lady in a Japanese Sunday supplement wrote: "The birth control propaganda is liable to kill the continence which is necessary for spiritual advancement. In short, the theory of birth control treats mankind like animals. It disregards the fact that the value of human beings is that the spirit can control the body, and it is an attempt to make man surrender to the sexual desire."

I was at first indignant when the police governor refused me permission to speak in public, and I resolved to find out the real source of opposition. Accordingly, I arranged on the second day after my arrival to call on that high dignitary of Japan at Tokyo. The quiet courtesy with which I was received soon calmed my ruffled spirits. Although it was only ten o'clock in the morning, tea was served, and current topics, with the exception of birth control, were politely discussed. Through an interpreter I was told that my name caused considerable amusement and confusion because of the similarity between Sanger and "Sangai San," which means "destructive to production." The chief of police and many of his assistants had read my book. It had been translated into Japanese and published without my permission, and was already making converts, even in the police department. The outcome of this interview was that I was permitted to speak in public, not on birth control but on population problems, to private groups and clubs without police interference. Thus I had jumped another hurdle!

As a result I was able, during my brief stay, to make thirteen

addresses in the various cities of Japan. The extent of the interest that had been aroused in the subject was indicated by the fact that out of one hundred and one monthly magazines published in Japan no less than eighty-one carried feature articles on the subject of birth control the following month.

Of the many meetings held in Japan none was more impressive to me than the one held at the Peers' Club before twenty-five of the country's most eminent men.

I have never spoken with greater freedom, I have never had a more comprehending, appreciative audience. I have never felt such a complete rapprochement with my listeners. I could not help comparing the breadth of thought of these Oriental officers with the unspeakable vulgarity and leering crudity with which the politicians of New York had greeted our attempts to bring the problem of birth control to the attention of the state legislature at Albany.

In Japan I was able to keep in close touch with Japanese life because of the hospitality of Baron and Baroness Ishimoto, at whose home my son and I were entertained. In Korea and China it was different. Although I was invited to the homes of many prominent people in Korea and China, they were all either American or English residents. Then again, in Japan most of the women are free from foreign influence. In China, on the contrary, practically all the women who are in any way advanced or who speak English are dominated by missionaries or other Christian officials. This influence shows in their lives—not always to the credit of Christianity.

One interesting result of my sojourn in Japan was the interest of the Tokyo Association of graduates of the Imperial University Medical College. At the twenty-ninth annual meeting held in the Uyeno restaurant, they passed a resolution organizing a committee to study birth control from the medical point of view.

Since that day, the movement in Japan has progressed steadily, the matter even being taken up by the Government. They have sent an official delegate to Europe to present a report

on every aspect of contraception as a social and national method of dealing with population pressure.

From Japan I went to Korea where I addressed a group at Seoul, consisting of bankers, missionaries, physicians, and business men. To them birth control came as a sparkling new theory, unfettered by the rags of religious prejudice and misunderstanding. When they opposed some of my ideas, it was with sane, objective arguments and not with the scattered darts of fanatical invective.

In all the Orient I was able to discuss birth control as a social measure for the betterment of mankind with an assurance of respectful attention. No matter how greatly my theory was opposed, there was none of the ranting bitterness I found so frequently in my own country—no priests denouncing me as an advocate of unbridled sex lust, no celibate clergy assailing me as the arch-apostle of immorality. Decency and consideration were shown to me instead of bigotry, abuse and hypocrisy.

From Korea we crossed the Yellow Sea to China. All during this time my young son was receiving much attention.

XX

CHINA

DUST, dust, dust! That was my first impression of Peking. We had traveled miles and miles past unlovely and uninteresting dry fields from Mukden. And then there were walls within walls! I could not like it. The thousands of corpse-like coolies were as depressing as they were astounding. The Peking Grand Hotel was elegant; but the boys who came to serve in the rooms were not friendly in their hearts, I felt, to foreigners. I didn't demand it of them, but after the sincere courtesy of the boys in the Japanese hotels, it created a feeling of uneasiness. I felt that I would die before our sojourn of seven days in Peking was to end.

We went to the Temple of Heaven on our first sight-seeing tour. It saddened me to be pulled about by the rickshaw boys. To see them running through the streets, their half-naked bodies covered with rags, all for the few pennies necessary to sustain life, made me ill and sad. The deserted temple and its gardens intensified my depression. At the Forbidden City there was more evidence of life and interest.

I was haunted by a feeling of uncleanliness; I wanted to bathe all the time, to change into fresh clothes. The dust suffocated me. The next day we visited the Ming Tombs at Nankow. I was carried for miles and miles by three coolies in a sedan chair through an arid, dusty land, ten miles to the tombs and ten miles back again. These poor, thin creatures trudged all the way. I was submerged in the strange despondency; I questioned "the oldest civilization in the world," which after how many thousands of years still permitted this!

But I did respond to my first view of the Great Wall. We came upon it after riding through a treeless mountainous country. The Great Wall seemed to recede from view with a mysterious rhythm. We walked on the top of it for more than a mile to one of its highest peaks. It seemed to be disintegrating rapidly.

Everywhere we found beggars, dirty and ragged. Finally, back to Peking we went, to bathe and bathe and bathe, in a desperate effort to get the diabolical dust out of noses, eyes and throats. My diary for these days reiterates the presence of dust.

Anyone wishing to take the negative side of a debate on the Malthusian theory would do well to avoid an opponent who has taken a trip through China. In this land, which Marco Polo once described as "a pleasant haven of silks, spices, and fine manners," all of the Rev. Mr. Malthus's hypothetical bogeys have turned into realities.

The tourist visiting China cannot help being impressed by the fact that overpopulation and destitution go hand in hand. Here one sees millions of people with scarcely clothing enough to cover their naked bodies. One finds, too, that these same millions are eking out a meagre existence and have to work twelve to fourteen hours a day to do even that.

On the way from Mukden to Peking—now Peiping—one was impressed by the fact that every inch of ground was being utilized. While on our trip from Peking to Hankow, and then down the Yangtze River to Nanking on our way to Shanghai, I was impressed by the fact that the land is so

utilized in producing food that the people are compelled to make their habitation in boats upon the water. There are so few roads in China that even that space is taken over for food production, and mile upon mile of great tracts of land is found cultivated for the barest necessities.

As soon as I had recovered from the fatigue of travel I sent my letter of introduction to Dr. Hu-Shih, and he called in person without delay. Still in his late twenties, Dr. Hu-Shih represented Oriental intelligence at its best. He had been educated at Cornell and Harvard, spoke English flawlessly, and was in addition one of the most charming gentlemen it has been my good fortune to meet.

The most promising of the young philosophers of China, Dr. Hu-Shih was gaining a reputation as the father of the Chinese Renaissance. He became instrumental in popularizing the vernacular as a literary language, so that today Chinese writers can express themselves in a tongue understood by the people, instead of the old classical forms which were unintelligible to all save scholars.

He told me that he was the only child of a young Chinese woman who had married a middle-aged widower with grown-up children. She had consented to this marriage because the contract money paid to the bride's family would help restore the family home, destroyed during the Taiping rebellion. But she adored her husband as well as her father; and this sense of duty was soon transferred to her only son. She undertook his education. At the age of three Hu-Shih was familiar with no less than 800 characters. He soon had read and memorized the ancient Chinese classics. Among his schoolmates he was called Shien-Seng, meaning "the Master." Fifteen years later, at Cornell this brilliant Chinese sophomore was nicknamed "Doc." He gave me a fascinating insight into the old family life of Old China.

Dr. Hu-Shih was a disciple of John Dewey, an ardent champion of the intellectual emancipation of his country. It was a delight to me to find such profound comprehension of my outlook in his recognition of all that birth control might mean

for the future of the world's civilization. Combined with Hu-Shih's philosophy was a keen sense of the world comedy, of the laugh behind the tragedy as well as the tragedy behind the laugh. I was to meet Dr. Hu-Shih a few years later, in London, in the company of the most brilliant thinkers; yet his intellectual stature suffered no diminution.

On my arrival he promptly arranged with the head of the Peking National University, Dr. Tsai Yuan-Pei, for my address there.

Dr. Tsai Yuen-Pei, who is at present head of the *Academia Sinica,* had gathered into his fold the most brilliant students of young China, all of them avid for the new ideas that were then being crystallized throughout the world. They had listened to Dr. John Dewey and Bertrand Russell. They hoped that the great Einstein himself would come to China to teach them.

My address at the National University was set for four o'clock in the afternoon. Long before we had arrived, the large hall was crowded, and only standing room was available. There was a great scarity of women. Men were standing in the windows and hanging on wherever there was a foothold. It was a stimulating gathering to address. The air was electric with expectation and anticipation. For two hours I spoke, and answered questions. The audience was responsive, alert, quick to get the point.

My discourse was translated by Dr. Hu-Shih and he accomplished this task effectively and brilliantly.

While it took me three hours to deliver a one-hour lecture in Japan, the same lecture was translated into Chinese in half that time.

After the meeting I was the guest of honor at a dinner given by Dr. Tsai, Chancellor of the University, and one of the leaders of the anti-Christian movement in Peking. Quiet, dignified, greatly respected, the youthful Chancellor spoke no English, but that barrier did not affect his benign hospitality. It was a typical Chinese banquet, with shark's fins, all sorts of queer and delicious dishes, and three kinds of wine.

The conversation was brilliant, and the repartee scintillated with the flavor of Chinese humor. At that table the discussion penetrated boldly into the realm of scientific research. It seemed to me that it was more advanced than any thought in the rest of the world. The banquet lasted until midnight. My little pamphlet, "Family Limitation," was passed around, read, translated into Chinese, and was on the press the following morning. Five thousand copies were printed and in circulation that afternoon!

In Peking war clouds were already hanging over the city. The air was tense. Streets were patrolled by armed police. Chang Tso-Lin, in the north, Wu Pei-Fu in the center, Sun Yat-Sen in the South, were all trying to make for a United China. We left for Hankow on the last train to leave Peking for several days.

Finally, after a trip on the picturesque Yangtze, we reached Shanghai.

In Shanghai, I was particularly distressed to find the foreign quarters so well cared for, with paved streets, beautiful palatial residences, few children well governed and looked after; while off in other quarters of the settlement, the Chinese native dwells in unspeakable squalor. It amazed me that foreigners—Americans, English, and French—could live here and close their eyes to such sordid, degrading conditions. They could not live amidst such conditions in their own country without an effort to improve them. It has been said that China swallows up, psychologically speaking, the morale of all who come to live there. I certainly believe that this is true, for during my conversations with foreign missionaries and business people, I found that they had lost many of those standards and qualities of character and conscience which had been bred in them for generations.

During the entire visit I could not accustom myself to the hardships suffered by the rickshaw boys. Being pulled around by an emaciated human being was abhorrent to me. The sight of them everywhere, clothed in thin trousers and shirts, usually suffering from varicose veins, hunger, and heart disease,

is unforgettable. It is said that the rickshaw boy lasts but four or five years at most in this uncivilized occupation; the remainder of his life is spent eking out an existence. Eagerly they solicit your trade, and pick up the shafts of their little vehicles and begin the dog trot journey.

Mr. Chen Hai-Chang took me to one of the cotton spinning mills on the Yangtze, a few miles out of Shanghai. We went out on an ordinary trolley car, with a first and second class division, as in Europe. We went into the homes of the workers, and found there some of the women who worked on night-shift. These homes were one-story shacks, consisting of two rooms at most. Several children and grown-ups occupied each of them. Cooking and washing were done in the squalid alleys. The mill we visited was one of the largest in China, and employed more than five thousand girls and women. It was a shock like a blow to find tiny children at work. There were hundreds of undernourished, bony little girls who could not have been more than eight years of age. There was, however, no evidence of "speeding up," a diabolic method I had seen in the mills not only of my own country but in Japan as well. Our appearance, and the attention we attracted, was a welcome interruption, and the occasion of a brief recess from their monotonous tasks. I was informed that these pitiful little creatures received about ten cents Mexican a day (the equivalent of half that sum in American money) for ten or twelve hours' work. Mothers brought their infants to the mill, nursed them there and put them to sleep in baskets beside their machines. The air was saturated with lint and cotton dust. There was light, but the air was suffocating. Here was further evidence of the sacrifice of motherhood and girlhood before the despotism of machine industrialization.

I was invited to address a meeting at the Labor Museum in Shanghai on behalf of three organizations: the Kiangsu Educational Association, the National Association of Education in China, and the Association for Family Reformation. It was the third anniversary meeting of the last named, the Associa-

tion for Family Reformation. The three essential rules of this organization were not to drink, not to smoke, and not to gamble. Its membership, therefore, remained small. I suggested a fourth rule of limiting the family to cope with the mother's health and the father's income, and the suggestion was roundly applauded. About eight hundred people were present, which seemed a small audience after the response elsewhere. The women here attended in some numbers. A young woman, lately returned from America, was given the task of interpreting my remarks, paragraph by paragraph. I soon discovered that despite her American prestige she had difficulty in understanding me. They had asked me to speak in part upon the practical aspects of contraception. When I began to do so, the waning courage of my timorous interpreter took flight. She turned to me and said, "I will go and find a doctor to say that," but the only doctor available had been talking, and had not heard my remarks on the technical aspect.

A reporter of the Shanghai *Star* took me for a tour in the Chinese city, where we saw innumerable women with babies lying in the street begging. There were lepers too, and hundreds followed us clamoring for pennies. Then we visited native factories, where we found children, almost babies, hunched over their work.

My excursions and sight-seeing tours were interspersed with meetings. The Japanese Women's Club asked me to speak. In a luxurious private home I met a grathering of cultured men and women. The discussion was frank, and all details of birth control were spoken of without embarrassment. These Japanese in Shanghai I found to be an unusually intelligent group. Freed from the restraint of tradition, the women spoke openly and freely. It seemed to me that they were far more advanced that Japanese women in their native land. They presented me with a generous gift and escorted me back to the hotel. Their charm won me completely, even more than in Japan, because I sensed their courage when liberated from the bonds of convention.

In the company of Mr. Blackstone, a progressive missionary who had lived in China for the past seventeen years, there came the inevitable inspection of the "red light" district—I had insisted upon seeing the worst of Shanghai. He spoke the language fluently, and was himself an officer of the Door of Hope, a house of refuge.

The women could be seen through open doorways. Gowned in vivid colors, heavily rouged, they stood out like posters against their squalid background. I shuddered to see women of all races huddled together in Oriental degradation. Soon streets and alleys began to be crowded with sailors, British and American, and, seemingly, all other nations. They apparently preferred the foreign quarters, which certainly are brighter in color than the Chinese districts, so depressingly dark and gloomy.

An unforgettable experience it was to pass through this Inferno, stared at by baby faces through open windows. Each "sing-song girl" took her turn upon a high stool, watching the narrow streets to attract the attention of passers-by. In one of these houses we came upon six girls, the youngest surely not more than ten years old, the oldest not more than eighteen. They were seated on hard benches in a cell not more than six feet by nine. Some were Eurasians. Several of them were asleep on the hard benches. The dreariness was inexpressible. We talked to one little girl who said that she was sixteen years old and had lived in one house since she was twelve. She had given up any hope of a change. She seemed as old as the ages in vice, yet her poor little body had the immaturity of fruit picked green and left to shrivel. "Me no want baby," she said, and it was as if a thousand years of tragic sorrow were concentrated in her voice.

We were permitted to inspect the rooms upstairs. They were clean, but depressingly bare and dreary. The girl escorted us with a lamp so that we would not trip and fall. We paid her a few dollars for her trouble, and left. The poor thing seemed surprised at our leaving. Her invitation to stay had

been urgent and kind. She responded so sadly to this unusual human contact—she had so few of them.

The Japanese quarter, not far away, was clean, decorative, and indeed attractive. We found soft, low lights, plain but neat interiors, some of them with a restrained elegance. The girls were dressed in bright costumes, and there was an undercurrent of music in the air.

The missionary told me that there are thousands upon thousands of sing-song girls in China. He estimated that there are no less than 100,000 in Shanghai alone. Some of them are sold as babies in times of famine, and brought up for this occupation into which they are thrown at a shockingly low age. They belong body and soul to the keeper, and are never permitted to return to their native homes. Any attempt to run away or any insubordination is promptly met by the cruelest beating and torture. At a certain age they are even sold or rented for a period to Americans and Europeans residing in the Orient.

I confess that after inspecting these districts it was difficult to shake off the hopelessness, the despair they threw upon me. I went away sick in soul, with doubts and pity. Is there, after all, any real hope for this human race, with all our talk of ideals and aspirations? I asked myself. It was horrible to see men of one's own race bargaining with these poor victims for their bodies, or glossing over their depravity in evening clothes in an atmosphere of luxury. They seemed like specimen cases in the devil's laboratory.

We turned from this picturesque area of vice and roamed into the Chinese theatres, and enjoyed the gorgeous traditional costumes on the central figures. At the same time the stage hand, dressed in dingy, everyday clothes, supplied the "properties" of the grandiose hero. Perhaps there is a symbol in that! It was incongruous, but then, so is life. We heard the story-teller on the stage. So, I was told, the Chinese learn the history of their glorious past and also the current news of the world, most of them being illiterate.

Finally, we found our way to the docks where I was to

take a boat for Hongkong. My son and some friends were waiting. We found the boat at last, but it was too small and a freighter; so we took our bags and went back to wait for a more commodious steamer.

Even as I write these memories, aided by my diary, the odors of China seem to assail me. Each city, each district, has its own peculiar and inimitable smell, but in addition China has a mysterious odor all its own. I can't say what it is—who has ever suceeded in describing an odor with words? But this fragrance or odor comes and goes in various places. It seems to march upon one, faintly, indistinctly at first, like a distant army, and then to close in relentlessly, associating itself with memories, making one gasp in protest. Shanghai is one of those spots—I mean the native Shanghai, not the foreign city in such striking contrast with the squalor of the Chinese quarters.

In Shanghai, the missionary dominates the education of the natives, such as it is. Strange it was to find that these missionaries had large families—eight or ten children, as a rule. I was told that they were paid a bonus by the missionary foundations upon the advent of each additional child.

Our meddling Christian methods have only complicated Chinese problems. If the missionaries make an extensive campaign one year to keep parents from drowning girl children, they will find corresponding increase in sing-song girls, making their living by prostitution, the next year. As each of these girls told the same story of many babies at home—"too much baby—no chow"—convincing proof was furnished again and again that birth control is the immediate solution of such problems, especially as they relate to the future.

China, I believe, offers the best argument in the world for birth control. It represents the final act in the national tragedy of overpopulation. Here is a great empire prostrate in the dust. China, the ancient well-spring of art, philosophy, and the deepest wisdom of the world, has been brought down to the lowest conceivable level by the brutal, bestial, and squalid breeding of the worst elements of the yellow races.

There are millions of people in China who live below the level of animals. They eat, sleep, and breed in the crowded streets and sunless alleys. Many of them have not even this meagre foothold on land. They are compelled to live on makeshift boats on the river. Go through the reeking labyrinth on one of these native Chinese cities on a day when a hot sun brings out all of the wretched, uncurable, diseased and leprous breed with the rapidity and irresponsibility of flies. And we are asked by the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church to believe that this multiplication of disease, filth, and degeneracy is directed by divine will and must not be checked by a controlled fertility.

When my enemies speak of the beauty and sanctity of large families, even under adverse circumstances, I no longer rage and storm. I turn the leaves of my visual album to a certain unforgettable picture of a street scene in Shanghai. Walking through the slums with a missionary, I saw a leper woman, covered with rags, lying on the sidewalk, her emaciated body shaken in labor pains. She was actually giving birth to a baby, while her naked, pock-marked children, who were the only creatures who dared come near her, clambered over her convulsed figure. A hole in the darkness behind them was their home. Horrified by this spectacle, I moved on, followed by a crowd of starving, naked children, some of them blind, all blemished and malformed, crying in pitiful voices for coppers.

China is a land of ghastly object lessons. The age-old injunction to increase and multiply has been carried to a literal conclusion. The teaching of the Roman Catholic Church has been here fulfilled. The herdlike obedience to blind instinct, the policy of non-interference with the course of nature, have been punished with the inevitable curse. Pestilence, famine, and war are the loathsome substitutes for contraception in checking the population growth.

Hongkong was another story, with its thousands of sampans, its busy water-front life. Sampans filled with a strange, busy population, which spawns, lives, and dies in these strange

little craft. Then comes the shock of discovering that the coolies engaged in coaling the steamers are women. At the ends of a sturdy pole across their shoulders are attached two heavy baskets of coal. They clamber like ants, in their bare feet, over the coal barges. They do not sing like the male coolies in the north. These women coolies carry bricks for the brick layers, break stone, work long hours in rice fields—do all the unskilled work that men do. I was learning more and more about a much-advertised civilization; learning more about the actual condition of women in this modern world of ours.

China recedes into the background—yet I cannot forget the impression of the bound feet of the women. Was this a custom devised by some mandarin to keep his wife from running away? I did not know; but wasn't it the perfect symbol of the enslavement of woman's body? No creature could get very far away with such feet. Sometimes the bones were broken. I was told that the mothers used to sleep with a switch at their head to beat the little girls when their cries of pain became too uncontrolled, too disturbing! This process, I was informed, began when the child was three, and was complete in two years. Now the custom is dying out in the more advanced cities; but in the interior it is still "the style." However, hospitals and schools were said to refuse girls with bound feet, so a beneficent influence is being exercised to that extent. I had seen many women in Peking with bound feet. At Hankow it seemed to be the universal custom. I saw two or three of them leaning upon each other for support as they walked along. What a relief it was to discover children with normal feet! Though to see Chinese nurse-maids with bound feet hobbling painfully along after their European charges made me want to protest.

I regretted that I had not met more Chinese women. The more advanced ones were being educated by the missionaries; their future development will undoubtedly be influenced by this background. We hear of the influence of the celebrated Soong sisters in the Kuomintang government at Nanking;

of any deep emancipation, I must confess that I found slight evidence.

While my tour through China did not have the same significance as my meeting in Japan, yet I feel that, considering the lack of time and preparation for my Chinese trip, the results were excellent. The Chinese press was thoroughly sympathetic, and the China *Times* devoted a whole section to the subject of birth control in its Sunday issue of April 30th. This group of young Chinese editors has kept up a steady flow of birth control articles in the Shanghai press from that date to this. *The Ladies' Review,* a Chinese monthly magazine, devoted its May number exclusively to a discussion of the subject along lines of enlightenment and encouragement.

Wherever I spoke, I met an enthusiastic response. I feel that one of the important things for birth control sympathizers to do is to keep the spirit of the cause alive in China. For certainly China is as striking an example of over-population and resultant degradation as the world can show. "It might with difficulty be made the reformer's first battle ground, for from what we know of our customs it would be a hard fight, so hard that if it were won the education of the rest of the world would be a simple matter." So said the *South China Morning Post.* This epitomizes the situation in a few succinct phrases. Yet, in spite of it, I believe that there is no more encouraging prospect for the general practice of the idea than in China.

The fine flame of the ancient Asiatic spirit is flickering. It is threatened with extinction. There is the rising tide of famine, of wretchedness, of epidemics, of transmissible diseases—now of civil warfare—a flood which is spreading with serene disconcern of efforts to stop it.

We are asked to contribute to famine funds, to the support of Christian missions in China and Japan, or to Far Eastern philanthropies. It is an obvious fact that the great part of these funds is not devoted to intelligent, scientific charity, but to the never-ending and fruitless task of temporarily relieving physical miseries of otherwise neglected elements.

A year after my visit to the Orient, I received a letter from Chen Hai-Cheng of Soochow assuring me that my brief visit to China had not been without tangible consequences. He wrote:

"Ever since your departure, birth control has become one of the much-discussed topics of the press and among the intellectuals of this proverbially conservative land. As far as I know, hundreds at least have actually practiced and followed the different methods as suggested in your pamphlet. . . It has been translated into Chinese and published by myself. The first edition enjoys a wide distribution in Shanghai, Peking, Nanking, Changsha, and other cities, though with only a little publicity. The copies have been practically exhausted. We are therefore considering the feasibility of a second edition . . .

"The reading of this little pamphlet has already stimulated people's thinking to such an extent that more than a hundred have written to me for further enlightenment on the subject... Had these readers not been handicapped by linguistic barriers, they would have showered you with such inquiries. As a matter of fact, all of them were confidentially answered to the best of my ability. A nucleus has been formed which consists of about twenty members who thoroughly believe in the propaganda. Two are professors at the Government Peking University, and two are editors of the Commercial Press. . . As you have seen, the China field is particularly rich with possibilities. No legal nor constitutional stumbling blocks are set in our way as yet. But we are at the infancy stage, so to speak. We have to look up to you for guidance and instruction. We rely on your kind sympathy and support."

It was a relief after it all to find repose on the S. S. *Plassy* en route to Port Said; to sit in the glorious breezes and to dream; to be surrounded by fifty or so clean young British couples going home with their clean young children; some

of them with Chinese nurses, which meant that "Pater" was on his vacation and that the family would return to the Orient in six months or a year.

Yet it came as a shock to discover that even on this side of the globe, my movements were officially scrutinized.

At Hongkong I had been informed by the so-called "water" police that the Chief of Police wished to see me.

"Is this an invitation for all the passengers, or only for me?" I asked.

"Only for you, madam," the police officer smilingly answered.

I went to the hotel, and later in the day I called for a chair and was carried to police headquarters. Naively I inquired if there was anything the matter with my passport. The chief was not present at the moment. A consultation among the other officials was called, but none of them knew why he had summoned me.

The next day he called and left his official card at my hotel. I returned his call, and left my card at his office. This went on for three days while I remained at Hong Kong. Finally, the boat sailed, and we went on toward Singapore.

Word of my approach had evidently been cabled ahead. There was noticeable agitation and excitement among the officers when my passport was shown. I was politely asked to stand aside while they went into consultation. Then I was ushered upstairs into the private office of the chief officer. There I was questioned by a charming young Englishman concerning my intentions in going to India.

"But I am not planning to stop in India!" I protested.

"They are announcing several lectures by you in both Bombay and Calcutta," he informed me.

"This is the first I have heard of it," I responded. My mind worked quickly: I realized that I had evidently missed one boat's mail in Japan and also in China from the Indian adherents; consequently I had abandoned the idea of lecturing there. "But would there be any objections," I asked, "should I desire to stop off in India?"

"That would depend on the subject of your lectures."

"There is but one subject that interests me," I answered.

He pressed a button. Miraculously, almost like a scene out of a mystery play, as if the whole scene had been rehearsed in advance, an attendant entered and placed upon the desk a large case-card, closely typewritten.

"Only one subject?" queried my interlocutor, with a smile. "Then what about your interest in"—and he read from the card, which evidently recorded all my various interests and activities of the past several years in America in an organization called Freedom for India—"Freedom for political prisoners? What about your friendship with Agnes Smedley?" Agnes Smedley was a radical young American schoolteacher who had been drawn into the battle for free India. She is now in Shanghai.

And there, in distant Singapore, on the other side of the world, this British officer read from that card details of a small reception that I had given five years before, in the privacy of my modest apartment in New York City, for Agnes Smedley, after she had been released on bail in a birth control charge that had later been dismissed. Her crime had been that she had in her possession a birth control pamphlet. Had there been a secret service man in that gathering, or had there been a dictaphone to record so accurately the outspoken criticism of British rule in India?

I was speechless with amazement.

"Why shouldn't I be interested in the ideals of my compatriots?" I asked. "Why shouldn't I help her when she was arrested for a cause that is my own?"

He listened politely as I recounted the details of the battle that has been waged against birth control. At the end, he agreed that if the vast millions of inhabitants of India wanted to receive that message he for one was all for my going there. He was intelligent and friendly. He said he would visa my passport if I desired to go on that mission.

Other considerations, however, made it impossible for me to go to India at that time. The Fifth International Conference was to convene in London in a few weeks.

XXI

INTERNATIONAL AWAKENING, 1922

MY STAY in the Orient had been strenuous. It was likewise unique and interesting. From the time of my arrival at Yokohama to the date of leaving the police headquarters in May, I had given over five hundred interviews in Japan alone, at most of which there were present several reporters representing different newspapers or magazines from all over the country. Very early in my career I had realized the importance of giving clear, concise and true concepts of birth control to those interviewers or reporters who wished to write about it. This simple policy served my purpose well in the Orient, where labored English with technical phrases was completely lost. However, the strain of so many interviews began to tell on my health. In Yokohama I had been ordered to bed for ten days, and I was forced to cut short my stay in Japan and to cancel many lectures which I had planned in China and India.

Accordingly, we set out for London where I hoped I might recuperate. The long trip through the Red Sea at that late

season was torture and we were thankful to reach Port Said alive. My son Grant, who had traveled with me for the whole eight months, was very ill in Cairo, but recovered sufficiently for me to take him on to London. Upon our arrival in still another new and strange country, he became homesick for the first time since we left New York eight months before. He was "fed up" with strange sights, strange people, new customs, temples, churches, shops, art galleries and historic sights. He was no longer interested in anything but a tennis match. His mind refused to register the historic significance of other things. I knew he longed to be among the boys of his own age, so I cabled to a friend conducting a camp in Maine, and upon his reply I shipped my young son across the Atlantic on the S. S. *Majestic* to his native land. He had had all his mind could absorb. But that voyage around the world made all the difference in the world in his future outlook and studies. I have never regretted taking him along, though his headmaster protested vigorously against it.

The English Malthusian League, still headed by Dr. Charles and Mrs. Bessie Drysdale, had called the Fifth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference in London for the four days beginning July 11, 1922.

On that date we gathered at Kingsway Hall, delegates from Europe, from Asia, from America. With the exception of Russia, all of the countries manifested their interest. Frau Rosika Schwimmer of Hungary and Herr Johann Ferch of Austria evoked tragic notes from those two depleted countries. Coincident with the opening of this conference, there had been the public statement concerning love and marriage by Lord Dawson of Penn, the king's physician, to the bishops at Lambeth—a sort of Magna Carta of married love, which had created a great sensation in the press and which acted as an auspicious prologue to the opinions then expressed. In addition to Lord Dawson of Penn, our movement seemed to be supported by the most distinguished minds of Great Britain. Unequivocally they expressed their convictions concerning population and contraception—men like the Very Reverend

William Ralph Inge, dean of St. Paul's, the Bishop of Birmingham, H. G. Wells, Havelock Ellis, Professor MacBride, an eminent biologist, Harold Cox, editor of the *Edinburgh Review,* and John Maynard Keynes, the economist. All of these distinguished men gave strength and dignity to the cause.

Two birth control clinics had already been established in England the preceding year. Dr. Marie Stopes and her husband had opened the first one, and the Malthusian League had organized the second. Today, in 1931, there are nearly twenty-five, all under private auspices, although contraceptive advice is given from government welfare centers as well.

The Fifth International Conference was well attended. It united advocates of the population movement from Germany, Austria, France, Italy, and the Scandanavian countries into one strong international body. Considering the unsettled conditions of Europe and the still seething hatred of Germans everywhere, the attendance of continental delegates was surprisingly large.

To England's credit may it be said that the German and Austrian delegates were treated with every courtesy and consideration. Any feeling hanging over from the war time propaganda was thrust aside, not only out of an innate courtesy on the part of both Dr. and Mrs. Drysdale, but because the English sense of respect for intelligence is dominant.

It was a deep satisfaction to me to see that in England birth control was being supported by scientists of unquestioned and distinguished authority. England, particularly in these scientists—as in her greatest literary men, her editors and her publicists—exhibited a moral courage and stamina that were too often lacking in the United States. And tolerance, in addition! They could listen to the Germans as attentively as to their own countrymen. Then too, it was a delight to work in an atmosphere unblighted by legal restrictions. This scientific candor resulted in a directness and a delicacy that banished any semblance of indecency or prurience. The newspapers carried the accounts of the conference with sincerity and sobriety. There was no effort to be sensational or facetious.

The Conference was opened by a reception given on the evening of the first day by Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Wells in their London home. Nothing more gracious than this act of opening his house to the members of the Conference could emphasize the support of this brilliant and influential leader of modern thought, one of the bravest, most courageous of men, brave in audacity, courageous in integrity of the mind and spirit. He has numerous good and loyal friends, many jealous friends, a few enemies, and millions of admirers.

H. G. Wells has liberated thought in America. He has influenced personal lives in great undertakings. He is one of the most truly masculine men I have ever known. He has not only brains, but a capacity for loving both individuals and humanity at the same time. He can be amusing, witty, sarcastic, brilliant, flirtatious, and yet profound at once. He is quick, sensitive, alert to the slightest meaning, or intonation, or feeling. To be with him means you must pull yourself up, keep alive every second, or you miss the Wells as he reveals himself to you in his writings.

It was always a source of great amusement to me to hear Londoners' remarks about Wells. People who had never met him thought they knew most about him. I was living in the suburbs of London in the spring of 1920 in a very nice, homey place where three elderly spinster women lived also. Owing to the closeness and intimacy of our living, it was known in the household that I had been invited for a week-end to Easton Glebe by Mrs. Wells. Great excitement prevailed. What train was I to take, what dress was I to wear, what other garments I was to include in my wardrobe—these were the important questions! They were rather horrified when I departed with a small week-end case, leaving behind me fluffy, feminine evening gowns of their choice. I returned Monday about midnight having spent the day in London seeing various people. As soon as I got to my room and closed the door, I heard steps in the hallway. A soft tap on the door, and in came the three ladies in night clothes; they had waited up to hear all about my visit. I told them as much

as I could about the other visitors, and when I had finished one of the ladies leaned forward and said in a loud suppressed hesitant whisper, "Did he try to kiss you?"

"Who?" I asked, thinking she referred to one of the guests I had been praising.

"Why—why—don't you know?" she stuttered.

"Know what?" I insisted. She looked a little abashed at this, so her sister took up the answer.

"Well, Sister means that Wells gets every woman he wants. He has a magnetic influence over them. They adore him."

"Was he fascinating?" the youngest sister asked.

And for two solid hours (until 2 a.m.) I was bombarded with such questions. The fact that there was a Mrs. Wells, whom Mr. Wells dearly loved, did not matter in the least. He was the villain lover, the Beau Brummel of spinsterhood in England.

I wish I could do justice in expressing my admiration for Mrs. Wells—"Jane" as she was affectionately called. To know her as the charming hostess, devoted mother, loyal wife, one must read the introduction by Mr. Wells to her own book, published after her death in 1928.

Perhaps the most brilliant as well as entertaining event of the Conference was a formal dinner given to the delegates at the Holborn Restaurant, a place famous for generations for its public dinners. To Americans especially was it a unique experience to hear the sonorous voice of the professional Master of Ceremonies, who stood behind the chair of the chairman, Mr. Drysdale. The first toast was "to the King," and as the Master of Ceremonies in his full uniform called out, "Pray silence for the King!" everyone rose, clinked glasses with each other while His Majesty's health was drunk by the international body. This dinner was attended by Mr. and Mrs. Wells, Sir Arbuthnot Lane, Professor Westermarck, Prof. W. W. MacBride of England, and an array of other brilliant personages of national and international fame.

One typical event of our conference was an excursion by motor to Dorking, the birthplace of Thomas Robert Malthus.

There we all sat around John Maynard Keynes while he made a splendid address on the philosophy of Malthus.

Mr. Harold Cox entertained us all at tea in his home at Gray's Inn, and the conference closed with a large public meeting at Kingsway Hall with H. G. Wells in the chair. Mr. Wells summed up the situation by saying that a subject like birth control becomes decent and clean when it is proclaimed from the housetops in the open, but salacious and obscene when whispered in secret and surreptitious tones. I remember his voice as he announced to us: "The choice before us is not a choice between innocence and knowledge. It is a choice between whispering, leering, red-eared and furtive-eyed knowledge on the one hand, and candid, straightforward knowledge on the other. We stand in this movement for the open ways, for the scientific method and for light."

The resolutions and manifestos of the Conference are worth recording in substance as expressing views on various issues then pending and embodying the thought and vision of far reaching consequences. Especially was there great vigor and encouragement expressed as to the extension of birth control education to the Orient and calling upon those governments to help their teeming population adopt the practice.

It condemned as short sighted and reactionary the policy of repression still existing in certain countries, and expressed the hope that at least those unfit by heredity may be enabled to decrease their number for the welfare of the race.

Attention was called to the benefits which the practice of birth control can confer on young people by enabling them to marry early and regulate the number of children in accordance with health, resources and possible future advancement.

We called upon the public health authorities and all Christian churches and welfare agencies to join us in providing parents with proper instruction and to supplement our teachings with such moral sexual instruction as would conform to their own standards of science or ethics, as would help to guard against abuse.

We urged upon the League of Nations to proclaim as a

great principle of international peace that the increase of numbers is not to be regarded as a justifiable reason for national expansion, but that each nation should limit its number to its resources.

The substance of these resolutions was dear to the heart of all members of the conference. It was like the creed of a new religion. The very air was electric with our faith and confidence in the possibility of a new order in human affairs.

The medical session was no less impressive and encouraging. First, the medical group called upon the medical profession to provide for instruction as part of the recognized duty of the profession in all hospitals and public health centers to which the poorest classes and those suffering from hereditary defects apply for relief. The conference also called attention to the fact that hygienic contraceptive devices are distinct from abortion in its physiological, legal or moral aspects, and further recorded its opinion that there is no evidence that the best contraceptive methods are injurious to health, or conducive to sterility.

Nothing could have been more timely than these resolutions (carried by 163 to 3) to offset the malicious, insinuating propaganda already begun in opposition circles.

At about this time in London there were two legal battles attracting public attention which kept the subject ever before the people. One of them was a libel suit brought by Dr. Marie Stopes against Dr. Haliday Sutherland for stating in a book that methods advised in the birth control clinic which she had founded and conducted were "dangerous and harmful." The suit aroused tremendous interest, and gave Dr. Stopes the opportunity of stating her case and of bringing to public attention both sides of this burning question.

In March, 1923, the jury's verdict awarded one hundred pounds to Dr. Stopes, but the House of Lords, as was to be expected from a body of its character, reversed the decision on December 21st, 1924.

The other trial was the prosecution of Guy and Rose Aldred in January 1923, for publishing my pamphlet, "Family Lim-

itation," the same which was then being distributed by the government of Yucatan to couples with marriage certificates.

It was most amusing to those of us familiar with the scientific approach to this subject to find that the learned judges of England were not shocked so much by the reading matter contained in the pamphlet as by a drawing, copied from a medical text book, which illustrated the exact position of the womb. It illustrated the correct way for the woman to feel her cervix in order to adjust the necessary device. This drawing was ultimately removed from the pamphlet, and the publishers continued to circulate it throughout the British Empire.

During the same year, Dr. and Mrs. Drysdale withdrew from the movement as leaders of the Malthusian and New Generation Leagues, and passed over to another group the responsibility of a cause which had been held so dear, and carried on so nobly, by two generations of the Drysdales for over fifty years.

From the early "fifties," when George Drysdale first published his epoch-making gospel of birth control, "The Elements of Social Science," throughout the Victorian era, through the tempestuous days of the Great War, down to these chaotic days when the whole world has been desperately driven to a realization of the fundamental need for the conscious control of population, it has been those brave self-sacrificing Drysdales who have kept alive the idea. It has been a noble tradition of the Drysdale family—this quiet, unceasing service, this loyalty to an ideal.

The movement in England was making solid advances. Nothing could now stop its progress. It was significantly noticeable that the trend of the movement in England was economic, influenced, no doubt, by such scientists as Keynes, Cox, Drysdale, and based on the work done previously by Mills, Place, Carlyle and back to Malthus himself. While Marie Stopes had energetically translated the idea into her own theories of sex education, nevertheless the weight of all arguments was at this time based on scientific, economic and sociological principles.

John Maynard Keynes said: "It is not merely an economist's problem, but in the near future the greatest of all political questions. It will be a question which will arouse some of the deepest instincts and emotions of men, and feeling may run as passionately as in some of the earlier struggles between religions.

"When the instability of modern society forces the issue, a great transition will have begun, with the endeavor by civilized man to assume conscious control in his own hands, away from the blind instinct of mere predominant survival."

European diplomacy was urging a high birth rate. Italy's attention was called to her falling birth rate, especially in the northern countries, which brought forth denunciation from Mussolini.

Report came from Milan that Premier Mussolini had declared the prolific birth rate of the Italian people to be one of the questions now crying for solution. "I will not," he was quoted in the New York *Herald* of October 19 as saying, "conduct any Malthusian propaganda. The fact that decadence worries other countries shows that we must be proud of our flourishing growth. Our births exceed our deaths by 440,000 yearly. In this small peninsula, numbering 40,000,000, these figures will show what a huge problem we are facing.

"Only three roads are open to us—to addict ourselves to voluntary sterility (the Italians are too intelligent to do that), to make war, or to seek outlets for the overpopulation.

"A star is again rising on the horizon—the German star. Germany, which we believed crushed, is already standing. She is preparing herself for an economic revenge, and next year she will start fighting to regain her world markets."

The last sentence, coupled with a statement that the Fascist militia is not to be disbanded, looks as if the present government of Italy is itself considering war for "a place under the sun" as a possible outlet for its surplus numbers.

On my return to America in October, 1922, I felt the vibrations of the Town Hall outrage in every direction which I

turned. We had to fight attempted persecutions and prosecutions vigorously at every stage.

The American Birth Control League, which had been organized at the First National Birth Control Conference in November, 1921, and of which I was president, now began to take the form of a real organization.

Immediately after the inception of the organization, we had set into motion through legal channels the request for incorporation under the membership laws of the state of New York. All kinds of interference by our foes was put in the way to prevent this. Finally, after much delay, Justice Bijur, of the New York Supreme Court, approved our motion, and a certificate of incorporation was granted to the League. It was our first legal victory, and we were ready to make the aims of our group a reality.

Our objectives and principles were printed and scattered widely. They have been the means of clarifying the birth control issue, and of setting the movement on a footing with other social agencies and scientific bodies.

The opposition to the work was no longer confined to New York, but permeated our activities in every part of the country. It intimidated legislators. It spread lies concerning our motives and character. It used the press, the police, the courts to beat us back into subjection. But the ocean could not be swept back with a broom. The truth was out. It illuminated the world. Motherhood no longer cringed before the relentless laws of fecundity.

XXII

1925: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, NEW YORK CITY

IT WAS one thing to decide to hold the Sixth International Conference in New York City. It was quite another thing to organize this conference and to finance it. Much more than a year was required to do this successfully. There was the interminable correspondence concerning details and plans with adherents and possible delegates in many distant countries. There was the problem of languages and interpreters. Even in Europe this is a difficulty; it was far more perplexing here. Then there was the eternal barrier of our laws. Topics that could be freely discussed at the Fifth Conference in London were dangerous and forbidden here. We did not want the dignity of the occasion again destroyed by the intervention of the police, as at Town Hall, nor of the federal authorities. But these complicated problems sank into relative insignificance when compared with that of getting the delegates to New York.

The announcement that I had set the date for the Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference

for March, 1925, brought blank or amazed looks from my directors' faces.

"How much do you think such a conference will cost, Mrs. Sanger?" asked one of the wealthiest members of the board.

"Not less than twenty-five thousand dollars!" I replied none too courageously.

"Have you any idea of getting that sum?" was another question.

"Certainly I have!" I said. "Activity, constructive activity always arouses interest and brings forth support."

Nevertheless, there was only negative interest. A meeting was called at the home of one of our directors. We invited men and women of such wealth that any five of them could easily have underwritten the total estimated cost. Yet this meeting was adjourned with nothing contributed except advice against having the conference. It was too expensive. Money was needed for our other work already under way, was the decision of my board.

Still my faith remained undiminished. With undaunted conviction that money would eventually come, I went ahead with the little I managed to obtain, bit by bit. I sent this money to the delegates for their passage over. It was impossible to send them round-fare tickets. My hope was that I should be able eventually to get them back to their homes.

Despite these manifold difficulties, I had no illusions concerning the importance of the ordinary delegate. Experience had taught me that the success of any international conference is dependent upon one of two factors, or both: it may depend upon the idea or ideal which animates it, or it may depend upon the presence of a certain outstanding personality whose very adherence elevates the idea into the realm of respectability and focuses national and often international interest upon the ideas under discussion.

With this thought in mind, I decided to make a hurried voyage to London to obtain, if possible, the attendance of Lord Dawson of Penn, the King's physician, whose audacious pronouncement at Lambeth concerning love and marriage had

aroused a storm of protest; or of Lord Buckmaster, an eloquent member of the House of Lords, whose legal standing would perhaps influence our legislators.

Mrs. Rublee and I sailed on the *Majestic* on September 27th, and I spent a crowded three weeks in England, returning home in less than a month. It was a delight to renew old friendships, to feel the solid support of the best minds in England behind the movement. Despite the temptation to sink back into the joy of those delightful friendships, to let time pass in luncheons and dinners and teas, I was forced to remember the object of my sojourn, and to arrange for meetings and interviews with those who were in a position to further my ends.

Havelock Ellis gallantly came up from Margate to see us. He was, as usual, removed from the hurly-burly activity of life. He did not share in the outward battle of ideas which meant so much to me; yet to meet him again was to return to the battlefield with renewed inspiration.

Then there was a delightful luncheon in Gordon Square with John Maynard Keynes and his wife, the former Lydia Lopokowa of the Russian Ballet, whose piquant performances I remembered with the old Washington Square Players in the Bandbox Theatre on East Fifty-Seventh Street. It was indeed one of the ironies of life that I should find this ballet dancer again as the wife of England's most brilliant economist, demurely presiding over the dining table in Bloomsbury while I tried to persuade Keynes to come to an international birth control conference! Keynes was terrified at the thought of coming to America; he was a writer, he expostulated; he could not waste time and energy trying to speak. But his perfect manners, his grace, his charm, all took the edge off my disappointment.

Then I hastened from this luncheon to have tea with Harold Cox; then dinner with the indefatigable Drysdales, staunchly but quietly carrying on their family tradition. They had inherited an idea, as in America one might inherit a fortune; and with praiseworthy loyalty had gone on developing that

idea until it became a reality, then passed the movement over to others to carry on.

The following morning I was awakened by a 'phone call from "H.G." I ran around to 4 Whitehall Court to find this human dynamo with vitality undiminished, to report my desire to capture for our conference one of England's best, to receive his encouragement and inspiration, to try to set an hour for a longer talk. At the moment, I had to dash off to the Walworth Center to look at the clinic, where I found no less than five tables equipped for instruction. A splendid piece of organization work, truly!

The next day there was a tea in my honor at Harold Cox's. J. O. P. Bland, that penetrating reporter of the Far East, dropped in for a few minutes and even promised to come over for our conference if only to "smile" approvingly upon it. Mr. Bland was witty and amusing. This man who tells unvarnished truths about the Orient was the very picture of health —and hated to be told so! I met Lord Gerald Wellesley, Lady Wright, Mrs. Graham Murray, Mrs. Alec Rea, Lady Oxford (Mrs. Asquith) and her sister. "The lords of this country," I wrote in my diary of that occasion, "are far more advanced and independent in thought than the stupid M.Ps."

Despite this incessant activity in the most varied circles, I managed to crowd in a motor trip to Oxford, with lunch at the *Mitre* and a walk through Brazenose and King's, driving back through Buckinghamshire, where the beeches were turning to bronze and russet, making me regret with a pang that so little of my life could be lived in England.

Eventually, through Mr. Wells's hospitality, I was to meet Lord Buckmaster, charming, affable, but reticent concerning my invitation to come to America. It was at the brilliant dinner given by Mr. Wells to afford me the opportunity of meeting the great men of his circle. I was placed next to Lord Buckmaster so that we might become acquainted. Others at the table were Mr. and Mrs. George Bernard Shaw, Sir Edwin Ray Lankaster, the late Arnold Bennett (whose generous support had been given in the open letter addressed in my behalf

to President Wilson nine years before), Sir Arbuthnot and Lady Lane, Mr. and Mrs. St. John Ervine, Professor E. W. MacBride of the Eugenics Educational Society, Mr. Walter Salter, of the League of Nations, Mrs. Rublee, and myself.

The occasion was really too brilliant, the conversation too engrossing to get down to a serious conversation with Lord Buckmaster; but Mr. Wells, in his tactful yet frankly natural way, opened up the subject for me. The best we could get was his promise to consider the invitation carefully, but the date interfered with the opening of Parliament. Mr. Shaw left us so early, on his way to a concert, that I had no opportunity for an exchange of ideas with him. He was in a frivolously facetious mood that evening; and there were other ladies present equally anxious to engage his attention and who succeeded in doing so.

Eventually Lord Buckmaster did not attend our conference. It was, nevertheless, a great satisfaction one year later to learn that he had introduced a resolution in the House of Lords calling upon the peers to allow the Government to give information on contraception and birth control in the welfare centers conducted under the supervision of the Ministry of Health. In an address delivered in the House of Lords in April, 1926, Lord Buckmaster made an eloquent appeal, touching the very roots of the social problem. This appeal he based upon an increased respect for the sanctity of life, with the hope "that people will be able to make for their children an easier and better place in the world than they themselves once filled.

"Some people, of course," Lord Buckmaster went on, "talk about the ennobling effect of a struggle with poverty! The people who talk like that have never known the struggle." Lord Buckmaster, with telling power, continued on in behalf of those in the grip of forces they can neither understand nor stem, upon whom the pressure of "civilization falls with such a weight that all happiness, all beauty, all hope are blotted out." He ended this noteworthy address by reminding the peers of Society's bounden duty to its women—"the women upon whose bare backs falls the untempered lash of the prime-

val curse declaring that 'in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children,' the women with the pride and glory of their life broken and discrowned, and the flower of motherhood turned into nothing but decaying weeds; and on behalf of the children—the children who are thrust into this world unwanted, unwelcomed, uncherished, unsustained, the children who do not bring trailing behind them clouds of glory but the taint of inherited disease, and over whose heads there hovers forever the haunting horror of inherited madness.

"On behalf of them I would appeal," concluded Lord Buckmaster in the silence that had descended upon the House of Lords, "and as men who believe in the great future of our race, I beg of you, I earnestly entreat you, to support the motion I seek to move."

Today the motion for which Lord Buckmaster made so eloquent a plea has become a reality, and everywhere in England Government welfare centers are functioning, and it is possible for parents to secure, under the direction of competent physicians and nurses, adequate instruction in contraception. Such actualities, we must remember, would be impossible unless every inch of the way had been gained in desperate battle, with theological prejudices to be overcome, ethical hairs to be split, scientific and medical points to be settled. In all of these struggles the gifts of eloquence, of persuasion, of compassion, in the possession of which Lord Buckmaster excelled, are certainly not the least effective weapons.

Leaving the brilliant gathering at "H.G.'s" that night, I realized that to possess even the sympathy, the allegiance of this gallant knight, embodying the finest idealism of his class and his race, would in the long run aid our cause far more than more tangible assets—and so in the course of a very few years, I had the satisfaction of finding my intuition verified.

Almost before I could realize it, the day came when I was booked to sail home from Southampton. Lord Dawson was just returning from a hunting trip. The only time possible to confer with Lord Dawson of Penn was three o'clock that after-

noon, shortly after his arrival. Promptly at that hour I rang the bell of his house in Wimpole Street. His secretary ushered me into the presence of the distinguished physician, and immediately all my misgivings vanished. I found myself in the presence of a courteous, well-poised aristocrat of about 45, handsome in an incomparable sort of way. He led me through the spacious hall to his private office. I wondered if I were going to catch the 4:30 boat train from Waterloo, but I dared not express my nervous apprehension.

A fire was burning cheerfully in the grate. Lord Dawson of Penn lounged in a leisurely way on the sofa. For him, apparently, there were not only hours but days in which the interesting subject of birth control might be discussed. He could not promise to come to our conference, interesting as the prospect appeared. What was the attitude of such men as the Mayo Brothers or Dr. Lewellys F. Barker, he asked. It would be better, far better, to enlist the support of the leading members of the medical profession in my own country. This I already knew, and I recited my efforts to arouse medical interest. Meanwhile, relentlessly, the minutes sped on, and I was finally forced to tear myself away from this delightful gentleman. His inability to come was no peremptory refusal, and his refusal was so deftly worded that I left his house in Wimpole Street with my faith that the miracle would happen still intact.

Then I rushed off to catch the train at Waterloo. An English friend had placed my luggage in a compartment, and no sooner had he helped me into the train than I was on my way.

As soon as the delegates from seventeen foreign countries began to arrive in New York, I was brought to a swift realization that there could be more problems in an international conference on birth control than theories and statistics prove. One of the distinguished delegates from France, Dr. G. O. de Lapouge of Poitiers, was put up at the McAlpin Hotel where the sessions of the conference were to be held. He could neither speak nor read a word of English. One morning the hotel doctor called us up with the information that one of our

delegates had been scalded by the hot water of the shower in his bathroom. He was greatly in pain, and needed an interpreter. Dr. Drysdale was summoned and hurried to Dr. de Lapouge. He found the poor little man, more than seventy years old, in excruciating pain but carrying on an amusing conversation about the dangers of America's much advertised modern plumbing. He treated his accident with Gallic lightness, however, and attended the sessions of the conference with unfailing regularity.

Then there were the Austrian delegates, Johann and Betty Ferch, incessantly protesting against the high price of the food in these New York hotels. They begged to be relieved from the pain of eating such expensive food. For the price of one meal in the hotel they could get all they needed for the day. I shall never forget the sight of that earnest little couple sitting on a wall bench in a hotel restaurant protesting with tears rolling down their cheeks against the price of a cup of coffee. Thinking of the privation in their own country, they could not indulge in that extravagance in New York. A cup of coffee here cost enough to feed a fellow countryman for a day.

Then there was Dr. Ferdinand Goldstein of Berlin. Hard of hearing, he sat always in the front row. He was a specialist in population problems, and the very mention of any new phase of the subject brought him promptly to his feet. Standing directly in front of the speaker, he would cup his ear in order not to miss a word. The only discordant note at the conference occurred when Dr. Goldstein walked out at the last meeting because the committee would not embody in its program the endorsement of abortion. He withdrew from the conference and the international movement.

At the "pioneers' dinner," held one evening after a long day of serious discussion, comedy of an unconscious yet irresistible kind was introduced by Fru Thit Jensen of Denmark. This tow-haired, determined little woman of no definite age, who might have been anywhere between twenty-five and fifty-five, had revived the beginnings of the movement in her own

country. She was to relate the difficulties she had had in organizing and arousing interest in Denmark. While she made her address in English, courageously enough, it was evident that her address had been translated for her by some one more familiar with American slang than with the technicalities of her subject. This English, or American version the dauntless little woman had evidently memorized. The audience was soon rocking with laughter at her quaint accent and the serious manner in which she was voicing the latest slang, ludicrously incongruous at that gathering. Her face remained sphinxlike in its determined immobility. Peals of laughter would interrupt her. She waited patiently to go on with her memorized speech. Then another ridiculous incongruity would unwittingly be voiced, and the dignified gathering would be set off in peals of laughter again. One distinguished biologist from Johns Hopkins, I noticed, was on the verge of hysterics; he could not control his convulsions of laughter. Such incidents are always welcome diversions, however.

Finally, the publicity of the conference, held as planned, began to arouse attention of serious students throughout the nation. I struck a new note in my welcoming address in asking that pensions be granted to those defective parents willing to be sterilized. My speech, in part, follows:

"To delegates from all foreign countries, I wish to apologize —if I may do so without any disrespect—for the obstacles you have had to meet, the obstructions placed in your way by some of the rules and regulations of our American government. Not being familiar with all our customs, perhaps you do not know that the government of the United States has enacted laws aiming to exclude from this country all 'undesirable' foreigners. These laws, like all such restrictive legislation, make it difficult for *all* foreigners to pass unmolested our famous Statue of Liberty. There is a *quota* restriction. Only so many foreigners from each country are allowed to enter each month. No; this is not birth control, though it is a crude method adopted by the United States to *control* our population. It is the latest method adopted by our government to solve the

population problem. And so you delegates from foreign countries have been made the innocent victims of an unsuccessful attempt of the American government to cut down the number of 'undesirable' citizens. I am glad that you have overcome these obstacles. As convinced neo-Malthusians, I knew you would. I welcome you to this conference.

"While the United States shuts her gates to foreigners, and is less hospitable than other countries in welcoming visitors, no attempt whatever is made to discourage the rapid multiplication of undesirable aliens, *and natives,* within our own borders. On the contrary, the government of the United States deliberately encourages and even makes necessary by its laws the breeding, with breakneck rapidity, of idiots, defectives, diseased, feeble-minded, and criminal classes.

"Billions of dollars are expended by our State and Federal governments and by private charities and philanthropies for the care, the maintenance, and the *perpetuation* of these classes. Year by year, their numbers are mounting. Year by year, more money is expended. The American public is taxed, heavily taxed, to maintain an increasing race of morons which threatens the very foundations of its civilization. More than *one-quarter* of the total incomes of our States is spent upon the maintenance of asylums, prisons, and other institutions for the care of the defective, the diseased, and the delinquent. Do not conclude, however, that all of our feeble-minded and mentally defective are segregated in institutions. No indeed. This is a free country, a democratic country, a country of universal suffrage. We can all vote, even the mentally arrested. And so it is no surprise to find the moron's vote as good as the vote of the genius. The outlook is not a cheerful one.

"France is making a vain attempt to increase her population by awarding bonuses to those parents who will produce large families. The day is *here* when the government of the United States should award bonuses to *discourage* large families. If the United States government were to spend some of its vast appropriations on a system of bonuses to decrease or to restrict the incessant and uninterrupted advent of the hordes of the

unfit, we might look forward to the future of this country with less pessimism. If the millions upon millions of dollars which are now expended in the care and maintenance of those who in all kindness should never have been brought into this world, were converted into a system of bonuses to unfit parents, *paying* them to refrain from further parenthood, and continuing to pay them while they controlled their procreative faculties, this would be not only a profitable investment, but the salvation of American civilization. If we could, by such a system of awards or bribes or whatever you choose to call it, discourage the reproduction of the obviously unfit, we should be lightening the economic and social burden now hindering the progress of the fit, and taking the first sensible step toward the solution of one of the most menacing problems of the American democracy. It is not too late to begin."

Two delegates attended from France, Mr. G. Hardy and Dr. de Lapouge; three from Germany, Dr. Ferdinand Goldstein, Dr. Helene Stoecker, Dr. Duehrssen; one from Holland, Dr. Aletta H. Jacobs, the woman who courageously opened the first birth control clinic in the world in Amsterdam in 1878; from England, Dr. Drysdale and Dr. Haire; from Hungary, Mrs. Rosika Schwimmer; from Mexico, Mr. Roberto Haberman; from Austria, Johann and Betty Ferch. India, Japan, Italy and China were represented by medical or scientific papers.

The second medical session on contraceptive practice and technique was so well attended by members of the medical profession that an extra room had to be provided in a nearby hotel for the overflow meeting, the two meetings being held simultaneously.

We had a list of foreign vice presidents, representing many countries, as brilliant and distinguished as ever graced the stationery of any group. Besides H. G. Wells, Harold Cox, Havelock Ellis, J. O. P. Bland, Arnold Bennett, Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane, Edward Westermarck, Sir Edwin Ray Lankaster, John Maynard Keynes, we also had Julian Huxley; Sir James Barr, M.D., ex-President of the British Medical Association; Dr. Corrado Gini, then of the University of Padua, Italy,

recently made Director of the Bureau of Statistics in Rome, mouthpiece on statistics for Mussolini; E. S. P. Haynes; Sir George Knibbs; Dr. Alice Hamilton; Lytton Strachey; Raymond Pearl; Dr. William Allen Pusey, ex-president of the American Medical Association; John Haynes Holmes; Dr. Adolf Meyer; Professor William F. Ogburn; Professor E. M. East; Professor Calvin B. Bridges; Professor Walter F. Wilcox; Clarence C. Little; and dozens of others equally prominent in their respective fields.

On behalf of the conference, I wrote the following letter to the President of the United States, requesting his co-operation in the great task which we had before us:

Hon. Calvin Coolidge,
President of the United States,
Washington, D. C.
Mr. President:

The Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference, now convened in New York City, has aroused world-wide interest in the complex problems of national and racial health. It has emphasized the biological and economic waste to the American nation involved in the segregation and maintenance at public expense of the delinquent, defective, and criminally unfit classes of our population. It has pointed out the organic correlation between an uncontrolled birth rate and the great national problems of maternal mortality, child labor, poverty, mental defect, and crime, and the vast national expenditures necessary to meet these problems.

It is imperative, Mr. President, that as a nation the United States meet this problem of an uncontrolled birth rate. As an American citizen, I respectfully suggest that you, as Chief Executive of the United States of America, take steps toward the formation of a Federal Birth Rate Commission. I suggest that this Commission be composed of impartial scientists drawn from the fields of economics, biology, sociology, genetics, medicine, and philan-

thropy, and have free access to all facts and statistics as to all customs and conditions now menacing the racial health and economic well-being of our country.

The formation of such a Commission would, I am sure, win for you the eternal gratitude of all American citizens who carry in their hearts a deep and disinterested love for this country, and who are concerned in its future. I believe that all patriotic American citizens, including yourself, Mr. President, must agree with me that our Chief Executive cannot willingly or consciously evade problems, upon a solution of which depends the fulfillment of our high destiny in the creation of the future.

Respectfully,

MARGARET SANGER.

The spring of 1925 closed with the general opinion that the Sixth International Birth Control Conference had been the means of inspiring finer work and of elevating the subject by gaining the scientific interests of biologists, sociologists, geneticists, and statesmen.

It had been a great occasion, a splendid achievement. No more imposing nor important conference has since been held nor had been held previously to discuss a subject so practical, bearing so deeply on the foundations of social evolution.

The results were as I had predicted. Funds and contributions to the cause came from all over the country. Old friends of the movement rejoiced in seeing so magnificent an array of intellectual opinion and thought gathered to discuss this momentous subject. Their contributions were comparatively small, but the vast numbers made up for that, and as usual our financial obligations had all been met by the first of the year, 1926.

At the conclusion of the conference, we held an organization meeting in my home to plan for a permanent international association and set the date and place for the next conference. By unanimous vote I was elected President of the International League. I declined this honor; and stating that I should like

to see the international movement advanced and led by men of scientific influence I suggested that we ask Dr. C. C. Little, the American educator, or Mr. John Maynard Keynes of London, economist, to take the presidency. If both of them declined, then I would accept the honor. This motion was carried unanimously except for one vote, that of Dr. Ferch, who insisted that I accept the post. Dr. C. C. Little later on accepted the presidency of the International League.

It was from this humble beginning that the population conference in Geneva in 1927 was eventually formed, from which the permanent organization, the International Union for the Scientific Investigation of Population Problems, sprang. Professor Raymond Pearl was its first president. I think Professor Pearl must now appreciate some of the ups and downs and trials and tribulations I endured in organizing the first population conference in the world.

Small beginnings often have great endings. It took me nearly one year to recover from the strain, physical, nervous and financial, of the Sixth International Conference. But recover I did. Before the year was out I was straining at the leash and impatient of delays in getting the next conference started.

"What about your boys?" Well, my two sons were growing up. Both boys together were sent to boarding school until they were ready to enter college. Having them away was one of those paradoxical issues which confronts every woman who is left alone to manage the future of her children. Some people criticize mothers who while working to support their children find it necessary to send them away to school. To me it is the supreme sacrifice every mother makes. It is the most unselfish act on her part, because it shows a selfless consideration of the child's good rather than an egoistic self-indulgence in sentimentality. To keep children at home meant New York streets for playgrounds unless one were fortunate enough to send them to good day schools where they are directed in study and play by teachers. In country schools there was constant supervision and direction, regularity of food and rest,

THE ZURICH CONFERENCE IN 1930

SOME MEMBERS OF THE WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE AT GENEVA, SEPTEMBER, 1927

Left to right: Prof. Lucien March, Dr. F. A. E. Crew, Dr. C. C. Little, Dr. E. F. Zinn, Prof. H. P. Fairchild, Prof. Corrado Gini, Sir Bernard Mallett, Prof. Julian Huxley, Prof. Raymond Pearl, Prof. A. M. Carr-Saunders, Dr. Binnie Dunlop, Dr. J. W. Glover

THE WAITING ROOM AT THE CLINICAL RESEARCH BUREAU

open air, exercise, and a natural environment of games and sports suitable to their age and development.

Sometimes the maternal hunger got beyond control, and then I'd catch the first train to the school and get the shock of finding the children happy at play; and after the first excitement of greeting passed they would scamper off to play, quite indifferent to the loving anxiety which brought so unexpectedly to school the busy, overwrought, nervous mother.

At times the utter loneliness of life seemed too much to bear. Especially was this overpowering when living alone in my studio in Chelsea in New York City. I'd come into my rooms late at night after a lecture or an extended tour or trip away for a few days. The same book I had left on the table in exactly the same place, the glove I had dropped on the floor, the pillow in the same angle on the sofa—all the same, just as I had left it, for a day, a week or a month. Not a cat, dog or bird to greet this homecoming. The fire dead in the grate. That first chill of loneliness was always appalling.

My nervousness before lecturing was akin to illness. For the first twelve years it was like a nightmare of agony even to think of a pending lecture. I'd promise to go here or there, and then try to forget it until a few days before the time to prepare. I'd awaken in the morning with a panicky feeling which, if I thought long enough, grew into a sort of terror. As the time approached for the meeting the nervousness increased. It was fatal to eat before a meeting. Fortunately, this nervousness ceased almost as soon as I stood on the platform, or as soon as I began to talk.

I liked best of all those meetings in the early days when at open forums the labor crowd, especially the I.W.W. or Anarchists or Socialists, would challenge my statements as to labor's benefits in practicing birth control. My year's study in Europe served me well. Facts and statistics were fresh in my mind, and I could answer readily all or any complicated suppositions they were likely to bring up.

To every woman there comes the doubt that marriage will fulfill her highest expectations and dreams. If there is doubt,

reluctance or apprehension even in the slightest degree in the heart of a girl entering into marriage the first time, these are doubled and trebled in their intensity when considering marriage the second time.

My first marriage had failed, not because of love, romance, lack of wealth, respect or any of those qualities which are supposed to be lacking in broken ties, but because the interest of each had widened beyond that of the other. Development had proceeded so fast, that our lives separated because of that very growth which we had so valiantly sought for each other. No life can stop to wait for another. We must grow, expand, develop and *be*.

So when in 1920 I came face to face with the realization that my heart was awakening to love again, I was troubled and perplexed. Here was a man born and reared in conditions which differed from those I had accepted as conducive to personal development and liberated thought—a widower with a grown family of three. Born in Cape Town, South Africa, his maternal grandfather was a minister of the Episcopal Church, and his father had been buried there when he was a very young boy. His mother, with the two children, journeyed to America in 1873 and settled in Baltimore.

J. Noah H. Slee came into my life after he had attended one of my lectures in 1920. At once we both felt a bond of mutual interest and understanding. He revealed the qualities of character that all truly great men—leaders in business, strong personalities—possess: accuracy, promptness, reliability, ability to take full responsibility and to drive things through, interest in detail, quick intuition, unerring judgment of character—all these, plus kindliness and the heart of a child! Success had come to reward hard work.

On the other side there is his conservatism—at that time, I had not yet awakened to the sterling merits of true conservatism. "J.N.H." was typically "American" in his conception of life, his religious affiliations, his set attitude toward all "liberal" movements. But fundamentally he was a spiritual radical and a revolutionist in common sense. A sense of humor, a wicked

desire to tease, and a common love of human achievement and endeavor attracted me strongly to him. Before I knew who he was I was in love with his radiant personality, and soon my misgivings vanished.

Still there were many problems to face. My own children, then in school near New York, were dependent upon me for their education, but more than that for affection and love and guidance. They had already had so little of me as I snatched time to visit them on week-ends or on rare occasions when I was speaking or lecturing in the vicinity. As I have already stated, their vacations were spent at Truro, on Cape Cod, in a cottage where my father and sister also lived. Seldom could I do more than spend a few weeks at a time there, when I would be called back to activities. If this was all the time I could give to my own beloved children, how much prospect was there of giving more to a demanding and loving husband?

For me, it was impossible to give up the work until much more was accomplished, and I knew that the cooperation of a man whose business experience had been gained in building up for thirty years a well known business, with such backing and interest as he could give, would help enormously in extending the work and expanding it along the lines I had mapped out on an international scale.

The questions constantly arose: Could I carry on the work after marriage as fully and freely as before? Would marriage interfere with my directing and devoting necessary time to its direction? Would children and a new husband conflict over mother's affection? Should I keep the name I was known by and under which the birth control work was directed?—or take in orthodox manner the name of the new husband? All of these problems, which seemed to be complex, melted away when discussed and thrashed out together. I was dealing with no weakling, but neither was he going to interfere with the progressive march of a movement he was proud to associate himself with. And so we were married!

About two years later we were amused to read in the New York newspapers that we had secretly wed. While this was

"old news" to all of our friends, I had not considered it of public interest to announce our marriage two years before. Within one week a thousand letters or more—an avalanche—from all over the United States and Canada were asking me for money for one thing or another. One man wrote that he had helped me get up a meeting in San Francisco and now needed a printing press—would I send him the trifling sum of $3,000 to get it? Another man wrote that I had once had dinner at his home when lecturing in his city, and now that he had painted pictures enough to hold an exhibit he wondered if I would send him the money to do it. Dozens of ministers, old men, old ladies, artists, writers, sculptors, people wanting to go into business, parents wanting to send their children to schools, to Europe, to music school, to sanitariums, God knows what. I never knew people could need so many things. I longed to help them all. I longed with all the desire in me to make out a thousand checks for every need and have a magic wand and say "So be it!" It was impossible to explain the fact that my economic status had not changed because of my marriage. I was not more able to respond to their needs at that time than I was before.

I had not wanted the worry nor trouble of handling money, nor do I want it today. To use it properly and get results is my responsibility. To me it's a messenger to do my bidding—that's all!

If I had one million dollars to spend outright on the birth control plans as I've drawn them up, I believe it would accomplish in fundamental principles of race building more good than any one other agency in social science today.

My elder son, Stuart, graduated from Yale's Sheffield School of Engineering. Grant graduated with honors in biology from Princeton University in 1931, and enters Cornell Medical College, New York City, in September. Their education was not neglected, even though the money saved had been spent in the early days in my endeavor to seek all facts and truth on the subject. I believe with Emerson in the law of compensation.

Seldom has a great truth emerged so truly and yet so sud-

denly upon the horizon of our thought in one generation. The fight by no means is won yet, but if those who believe in the justice of the cause would stand shoulder to shoulder with me in our advance upon Congress to repeal the Federal laws, we would win.

But these intimate confessions are leading me far beyond my story. I must return now to tell of my crusade in the realm of scientific research in that beautiful city of Geneva.

XXIII

SCIENTISTS' INTERESTS

I LEFT New York in November, 1926, going straight to London, with the idea of organizing a world population conference. I had long felt the necessity of having a scientific foundation for all future work. The propaganda aspect of the problem was in all countries far more advanced than the scientific or the medical development. Without the latter, no long-range program was possible. My aim was to establish an international movement which, through its findings, its precise researches, thoroughly correlated and coordinated, would help in the solution of political, industrial, and racial problems which everywhere in the world today are causing such grave concern.

An arduous, complex task indeed I discovered that I had set for myself. My first object was to get sufficient financial support pledged for the undertaking, and my second to find a distinguished man of recognized scientific standing who would act as chairman and whose name would carry dignity and bring prestige. The committee was first formed around

Professor A. M. Carr-Saunders, but this authority on population problems decided that he could not carry on so stupendous a task. Six weeks of work had gone into forming this committee when he informed me that his own obligations were too heavy for him to assume so great a responsibility; that he was willing to remain on the council in an advisory capacity, however, and would do everything in his power to work for the success of the conference.

Then the task had to be done over again, in the search of the field for a successor. After weeks of uncertainty, Sir Bernard Mallet consented to act as chairman. At one time Registrar-General of Great Britain, he has been in charge of the vital statistics of the Empire.

The Council of the conference included, I think, men of the greatest distinction in both England and America. Professors E. M. East, Raymond Pearl, H. P. Fairchild, Drs. C. C. Little, Wesley C. Mitchell, and Whitridge Williams represented the United States on this Council. England was represented by Havelock Ellis, John Maynard Keynes, Julian S. Huxley, Dr. A. F. Crew, Professor Carr-Saunders, Sir Humphrey Rolleston; Australia by Sir George Knibbs; France by Professor Léon Bernard, Lucien March, Andre Siegfried; Germany by Drs. E. Fischer and Grotjahn; Holland by Dr. H. W. Methorst and M. A. Van Herwerden; Italy by Professors Corrado Gini and A. Niceforo; Switzerland by Professor W. Rappard.

After overcoming many obstacles, it was finally arranged to hold the first world population conference at the Salle Centrale in Geneva on the three days beginning August 31, 1927. My aim was to assemble a conclave of biological, sociological and statistical authorities from all the civilized countries of the world, aiming toward the organization of an international body, where new researches might be coordinated and studied. Our announcements proclaimed: "It is known that the question of population growth holds possibilities of menace to the future of civilization, and yet the world population problem

is one of the great issues of today which has not been subject to concerted international action."

Geneva was chosen because it is there that the League of Nations meets. It is still my conviction that eventually the League of Nations, to be alive, must interest itself in the population problems of the world and help to solve them through scientific knowledge.

All the members of the Committee in England worked for several months to attain the cooperation of other scientists on the continent. Julian Huxley was especially active and helpful, and it was due to these efforts that we were finally enabled to secure so impressive a list of names for our Council.

From the inception it was my firm resolution not to confuse the issue with birth control or propaganda of any sort. Consequently I kept my name out of all the preparatory activity. The secretary, Mrs. Edith How-Martyn, who helped with the planning and organization, and I both remained in the background, carrying on the executive daily routine.

In April I established the headquarters in Geneva, and then began the arduous task of preparing for the translations of the papers to be read, and the setting up of the machinery which could function in four languages—German, Italian, French and English. Interpreters, translators, secretaries, and editors were to be secured, not to speak of printers and expert proofreaders with knowledge of the subjects. Hotel arrangements and accommodations had to be arranged for our expected three hundred delegates, no small task in Geneva at that time of the year.

No official president had yet been chosen for the sessions of the conference. Dr. William H. Welch, the dean of public health and American medicine, was arriving, and it was suggested that he be made president. Numerous other names were suggested. But I insisted that Sir Bernard Mallet, who had given so generously of his time to the British committee, was morally entitled to this honor. He came to me one day and said: "Who is president of this conference?"

"Why you are, of course!" I replied, and that settled it. He

was made president of the conference, and conducted the sessions each day.

To remain in the background during the preliminaries until the success of the conference was assured was one thing; but to have the names of all the workers who had made this success possible arbitrarily removed from the final program was to gain a strange view behind the scenes of international intrigue, a comedy often played on the Geneva stage. Sir Bernard himself ordered all the co-workers' names removed from the pages of the official program, including my own, as the final proofs were being sent to the press. Why was this done? Was it an anti-feminist group? Or was it the influence of something more subtle, something more pernicious, the order of some stage director behind the scenes who had given a peremptory order to the actors? These questions flashed through my mind. The latter proved to be the case, as I soon learned. Sir Bernard Mallet had pledged his word to the representatives of the Catholic countries—Italy, Belgium, Spain, and Catholic Germany—that birth control, contraception, and the conscious control of population would not even be mentioned. And this in the free atmosphere of a scientific population conference!

The younger men from England—Julian Huxley, A. F. Crew and Professor Carr-Saunders—protested against this usurpation of authority; but some of our representatives from the United States fell under the spell of the underhand manoeuvring.

This experience gave me an idea of the pitfalls and stumbling blocks that impede the way even of men of science, when once they are dealing with this vital subject. Like statesmen and legislators, they are subject to the machinations of these sinister forces.

A permanent union to study population problems was indeed the outgrowth of this conference. It was organized at the conclusion of the conference. Dr. Raymond Pearl of Johns Hopkins was made president. During the past four years it issued bulletins and formed the nucleus of population re-

search in various countries. The first international meeting of the assembly was held in London in June of 1931.

An idea is, after all, only a seed. The seed perhaps of a great tree; but that tree can never become real unless we plant in a proper soil, unless we nurse, support, and protect our plant from frost—the frost especially of political intrigue. It is a test of endurance, of patience—oh, of endless patience, of forbearance. How many young crusaders I have witnessed come galloping to show me the way, panting with enthusiasm for the cause of the movement, the reformation of the world! They were, forsooth, coming to teach me how to put "the movement" on a sound "practical" or "economic" basis. They were going to get vast contributions, so that money would not cease to roll into our coffers!

Now, I am not criticizing these men and women for their motives. They were merely specimens, most of them, of veneered interests, which rapidly become discouraged at the first show of real obstacles. When they are confronted by difficulties that are not illusions but of thorny disagreeable surface they are too willing to retreat instead of fighting through. And so in the birth control movement they have come and gone. When they remain, they have found work, work, work—and little recognition and reward or gratitude. Those who desire personal honor or power or who measure their interest by the yardstick have gone. It is no place for anything but the measureless love of giving.

Looking back at people and events in the birth control movement in the past twenty years is like gazing down upon a varied landscape from some promontory. The years run through this landscape like a winding road through a valley. There, I tell myself, is the little garden I tried to cultivate. There in that field, I took such care to plant the seeds of an idea. There they fell on barren ground. But over here, on the other side, in that little patch, they are growing, growing into fruitbearing trees.

At the conclusion of the Geneva conference, after preparing the Proceedings for the publisher, I hastened to Berlin with

the purpose of forming a birth control committee which would aim for the establishment of clinics in the German capital. The situation in post-war Germany was, and still is, a peculiar one. For one year, the statistics of Old Berlin indicated that out of forty-four thousand known pregnancies twenty-three thousand were terminated by abortion. And this was despite the fact that contraceptive devices could be purchased in every apothecary shop. At the same time, abortion remained a statutory offense, and the Association of German Medical Women had conducted a campaign against this statute. The injustice in the law was that it was the woman who was punished with imprisonment for abortion. Thus it was essentially a woman's fight, opposed by the Roman Catholics, the Nationalists, the reactionaries, and those men, like Professor Grotjahn, who cover the bitter pill of imperialistic ambition with a sugarcoating of patriotism. These patriots look at the world in terms of numerical greatness, and look upon Germany's women as mere machines in the cradle competition of human production.

This situation was brought home to me with striking emphasis when I spoke before the meeting of the Women's Medical Association in one of the rooms of the Town Hall of Charlottenburg, Berlin. My arrival had been announced in an excellent interview published by the *Berliner Tageblatt* in an article entitled "Fewer—but Healthier—Children," so that this meeting was attended not only by women physicians but by men as well—economists, lawyers, hygienists and professors. Dr. Durant-Weber, a woman physician, interpreted for me. I sought to show the evolution of birth control from infanticide, through abortion, to modern methods of scientific and harmless prevention. It was Professor Grotjahn who sought to present the picture of Germany's future greatness in terms of numerical surplus population, and to reduce women to the function of mere breeders.

A number of women sought to get the floor to denounce this statistical pedant. An energetic woman physician, Dr. Ruben-Wolf, answered him with devastating precision. She

gave figure for figure, fact for fact, each based upon her experience in Berlin. At that meeting but one man, and he a physician from India, dared to defend birth control. The meeting took a decidedly feministic character, in view of this traditional opposition on the part of these spokesmen of imperialistic ideals.

Two evenings later a group of women physicians gathered at my hotel, and the initial steps were taken toward the information of the *Beratungstelle für Geburtenregelung,* or Birth Control Clinic, which was opened the following May in Neukoeln, one of the most densely crowded working class districts of Berlin. For the first time the word *Geburtenregelung* (Birth Control) was applied to such a clinic in Germany. Frau Dr. Helene Stoecker, one of our pioneers, had indeed been instrumental in the establishment of Marriage Advice Bureaus founded and directed by the *Bund für Mütterschutz,* but none had sought to maintain a research bureau enabling the direction to keep a scientific record of each patient and thus to share in the standardization of methods and practice. Frau Dr. Ruben-Wolf has been most energetic and enthusiastic in carrying on the work among the working class, and Dr. Hodann includes birth control in all his lectures to workers.

Since that time, many other similar clinics have been established and they are directed under the supervision of the government.

My coming to Berlin had been prepared by my old friend, Agnes Smedley, thanks to whose energy I was brought into immediate contact with the outstanding women of Germany, pioneers like Dr. Hermione Edenhuizen; Frau Adele Schreiber, former member of the Reichstag who had translated my book; Dr. Helene Lange, mother of the woman's movement; and that graphic artist of the lower depths of Berlin misery, Käthe Kollwitz, who generously consented to do a drawing for my book, "Motherhood in Bondage," which was published a few years later. Frau Stutzin, whose husband is one of the leading medical men in Berlin, is now organizing the various

groups into a central united National Birth Control Research Association.

I returned to Switzerland in an effort to regain my lost energies, my strength being so depleted that a nervous breakdown was imminent. My plans had been made to go to India after the close of the Geneva conference. The arrangements of the papers and discussions and the preparation of them for the publisher (Edwin Arnold & Company, London) was a colossal task. By the time they were finished, I was utterly unfit for a journey to India, and taking Dr. Fritz Schweitzer's advice I went to St. Moritz for a two months' period of recuperation.

I shall always deeply regret that I was not able to make a visit to India. In that vast empire with its teeming millions there is a crying need for a strong birth control movement. It had indeed been inaugurated in Bombay, Calcutta, and other centers, and staunch adherents like Professor R. D. Karve, N. S. Phadke and others, were doing their utmost against tremendous odds. Several of my pamphlets and books had been translated into Hindustani, and birth control societies had been organized by young nationalists.

Curiously enough, opposition to birth control came from an unexpected source. About 1925 Mahatma Gandhi attacked modern contraceptives by proclaiming that the only method of birth control—apparently the Mahatma is not opposed to it *per se*—should be self-control. There is an old Sanskrit proverb to the effect that "even saints make mistakes." The most forward-looking of Indian publications deplored the Mahatma's stand as one of his mistakes. One of them called Gandhi's attention to the fact that "our country is teeming with mannikins having weak bodies and sunken eyes, born of mothers who are almost every year passing through the dangers of annual conceptions and confinements; and in the interest of the nation we must put a stop to this human waste of life."

Far more representative of a profounder insight is Rabin-

dranath Tagore, who wrote to me at the very time Mr. Gandhi uttered his unfavorable pronouncement:

Santiniketan,
September 30, 1925

Dear Margaret Sanger:

I am of opinion that the Birth Control movement is a great movement not only because it will save women from enforced and undesirable maternity, but because it will help the cause of peace by lessening the number of surplus population of a country, scrambling for food and space outside its own rightful limits. In a huger-stricken country like India it is a cruel crime thoughtlessly to bring more children to existence than could properly be taken care of, causing endless suffering to them and imposing a degrading condition upon the whole family. It is evident that the utter helplessness of a growing poverty very rarely acts as a check controlling the burden of over-population. It proves that in this case nature's urging gets the better of the severe warning that comes from the providence of civilized social life. Therefore, I believe, that to wait till the moral sense of man becomes a great deal more powerful than it is now and till then to allow countless generations of children to suffer privations and untimely death for no fault of their own is a great social injustice which should not be tolerated. I feel grateful for the cause you have made your own and for which you have suffered.

I am eagerly waiting for the literature that has been sent to me according to your letter, and I have asked our Secretary to send you our *Visabharati Journal* in exchange for your *Birth Control Review.*

Sincerely yours,
RABINDRANATH TAGORE

The younger representatives of India, keenly conscious that

the tide of time can never turn backward, will eventually turn sharply from this attitude of Gandhi's.

India's real awakening, from the euthenic and eugenic point of view, awaits the awakening of India's women. An all-women's congress was recently held there. I hope that by the time the next one is convened I may be able to deliver in person my message to the women of India.

XXIV

CLINICS AND THE LAW

I MUST turn back now a few years to gather up the threads of an important activity. The reader will recall that since the day I first visited Holland, my real aim had been the establishment of birth control clinics, and that my first step after the dismissal of the Federal indictment against me in 1916 had been the opening of the first clinic in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn. All of the subsequent publicity of the movement in a sense came out of the raid of that clinic by the New York police. Out of Brownsville grew my sister's hunger strike with its tidal wave of publicity; my own arrest and imprisonment; and out of that the organization of the birth control league, and the publication of the *Birth Control Review,* and the long, arduous task of educating the public through the platform and press.

I saw the clinic not as an isolated social agency, but functioning as an integral factor of public and racial health, forming an integral part of all pre-natal and post-natal agencies for maternal and child welfare. I envisaged it as well

organized as the public school system. Indeed, from my point of view, these systems of clinics were to be schools—centers of instruction, primarily in contraceptive technique, but schools as well for all problems of parenthood for men as well as for women, in the psychic as well as the physical aspects of marriage and love, centers where all sorts of difficulties might be straightened out and adjustments made; centers where parents might be taught how to teach their own children the basic factors in human relationships.

I have not sacrificed these ideals for the future, but I know that sometimes it is important to take one step at a time, and that the most imperative need is to make contraceptive methods available to all who most desperately need them. For around the problem of contraception all other marriage problems depend.

In view of subsequent developments, there could be no doubt in my mind that the battle of the Brownsville Clinic had resulted in a decisive, indeed an overwhelming victory. While it is true that the clinic at 46 Amboy Street had been brutally raided by the New York police, that I had been sentenced to thirty days in the workhouse, that my sister had sacrificed her health and jeopardized her life, and that for no less than five years thereafter I was hounded by detectives and in constant danger of arrest and conviction, yet after all these were insignificant prices to pay for the great victory won on the battlefield of public opinion. This had renewed my courage and given me manifold energy to carry on. I had discovered that the voice of the people was far greater than the dusty statutes. These laws were negative; they could not be enforced if the vast current of intelligent opinion were not only ignorant, but unconscious of them. At the same time, I knew that I should not evade dangers and risks—that I should not be afraid to go to jail if that were necessary to uphold my principles and ideals.

That earlier victory was confirmed by the decision of the Court of Appeals of the State of New York, handed down by Justice Crane in 1918, to the effect that physicians were

empowered to give instruction in the technique of contraception "for the cure or prevention of disease."

At first glance, this decision, with its limitation of the privilege, seemed to me to be both inadequate and silly, but I lost no time in coming to the decision to take advantage of it. To do so, it was necessary to find a doctor with a New York practicing license who would be willing to cooperate in this new venture. Lack of clinical data, lack of contraceptive supplies, lack of organized medical support, the impossibility of obtaining domestically manufactured supplies of tested efficacy—these factors had retarded American medical knowledge of the problems involved. It was indeed a subject necessarily ignored in the curricula of medical schools and in ordinary practice. Time after time, in my travels and conferences in the cities of the United States, my attention had been arrested by the observation that it is always precisely those doctors who are most ignorant of scientific methods of contraception who remain most strongly opposed to the whole theory of birth control.

Now I realized that this new clinic I was planning to conduct, even though assisted by a duly licensed physician, would become inevitably a storm center, a target for the attacks of our various enemies. I must make haste slowly. I saw that premature publicity would be fatal to its growth and progress. It would first be necessary to demonstrate its value as a social need. It would prove itself to be a health center. It was to be, I decided, an experimental bureau, designed to demonstrate the practicability of the birth control clinic in all cities and towns. Therefore we must carefully guard its progress; we must organize it as a nucleus for research, a laboratory, as it were, dealing with human beings instead of with white mice, with every consideration for environment, personality, and background. We would help them as they were to help us. Women at last could contribute to scientific research and become part of this human laboratory.

With these ideals in mind, I set out to find a suitable and competent physician, a physician with the moral courage to

risk her liberty to enter this battle with me. This was more difficult than I had anticipated. At one time it seemed that the problem was solved. Dr. Lydia Allen DeVilbiss agreed to act as a medical director. Rooms were found at 317 East Tenth Street, conveniently situated in a densely populated section of the East Side. A year's lease was signed for these rooms, and their transformation into a sanitary clinic got under way. Then the Town Hall raid occurred. Dr. DeVilbiss decided that it was an inauspicious moment to undertake the hazardous task of directing a birth control clinic in New York City.

Then came the interruption occasioned by my crusade into the Orient, followed by the International Conference in London in the summer of 1922. Therefore the rooms in East Tenth Street were eventually relinquished, and it was necessary to undertake a fresh start toward the planning of a permanent clinic upon my return.

It was during the year 1923—a year that remains in my memory as one of smiles and tears, of heart aches and anxieties, that finally I discovered a woman physician, Dr. Dorothy Bocker, who agreed to act in the capacity of medical director providing there would be neither lay committees nor boards of directors to dictate her duty or meddle in her direction, and providing I could assure her the yearly salary she demanded. Together we were to open a clinic, or research bureau as it was to be called. Everything seemed agreeable except raising the salary demanded by Dr. Bocker; that seemed prohibitive. But I scouted among our wealthy supporters to find one or two who would pledge the salary ($5,000) of the doctor.

"You will get into trouble." "You can't do it." "It's against the law." "Why should I pay to get you into jail again?" "It's a foolish dream." Such were the remarks made to me by even the closest of friends in the cause. Individuals of my board said: "Why, you can't now pay for the expenses you have incurred—rent, printers' bills, etc. How can you expect to pay for a clinic?"

Such a reaction seemed logical and sensible; but behind my

dream there was a driving purpose which persisted in pushing aside all such negative arguments and continued to urge me to reach out and out for understanding support.

The decision of the Court of Appeals concerning birth control, that doctors could give contraceptive information "for the cure or prevention of disease," offered too big an opportunity to let pass. I resolved to test that decision. Our enemies had become insolent, and had attempted to usurp the powers of state. A clinic was what we needed to test the decision of the courts and the law on our rights. But could it be done? Must I stand alone again? Must I always assume the financial and moral responsibility for every step taken?

Never in all my life had I wanted money so desperately as I did during the period. Never was a financial backer so greatly needed. It seemed to me that a golden opportunity was presenting itself, and I could not let it pass. Remembering a promise made to me by an English friend some years before—that if ever I wanted any help I was to give him the first chance to refuse me—I prepared a long cable stating the case and asking him for $5,000.

The reply came promptly: "Yes, go ahead."

Again God be praised! A great project could now be carried out! Plans, long thought over and carefully laid, were now put into execution. Dorothy Bocker was the woman physician, under a two-year contract with me, as we two alone were responsible for the work of this new venture. As no support had been given by any member of any organization for its establishment, it was decided to keep it free from official obstructions and to test out the court's decision alone in our own way, quietly, constructively, without any publicity.

In order to keep in close touch with the work of Dr. Bocker, I took two rooms in the building where I had the League's offices. These were accessible not only to me, but to the women who came daily to seek advice. Needy women asking me for advice were referred to the doctor and advised accordingly as their case came under the decision of the Court of Appeals, "for the cure or prevention of disease."

This was the first real attempt to establish permanently the movement and to center its activities around a clinic. During the first year there was no publicity. No news of our activities was given to any one. There was no advertising; there was nothing to disturb the routine of gathering facts from such patients as applied to us.

When, at the end of the first year, there seemed to be every prospect of continuing the clinic without interruption, I applied to the New York State Board of Charities for a license to conduct a dispensary in the name of the American Birth Control League, of which I was founder and president. A reply came from Richard W. Wallace, assistant secretary of the board, pointing out that since the League had been incorporated under the provisions of Article 3 of the Membership corporations, whereas corporations for the conduct of dispensaries must be formed under Article 7, therefore a license could not be granted under the League's incorporation.

The first annual report of the Clinical Research Bureau on 900 cases was presented at a public luncheon the following year. This insignificant news attracted the attention of those interested in this type of work throughout the country, and served at once as an example and as an inspiration for others to follow. We were besieged with questions on organization. Clinics began to be opened in other cities, and people who had formerly said, "Don't try to do it!" now expressed their approbation with the conventional, "I told you so."

As a result of the first report of the Clinical Research Bureau on 900 patients, I decided that it was an auspicious moment to organize a medical and scientific advisory council and to secure as medical advisor a physician with greater gynecological experience than Dr. Bocker had. Through the recommendation of Dr. Benjamin Tilton, one of our medical advisors, Dr. Hannah M. Stone accepted this post and has held it to the present time, constantly strengthening her position as one of the gentlest, most beloved and loyal workers in this field that one could hope for. Dr. Stone's sympathetic response to mothers in distress, her courageous stand in remaining at

my side, carrying on at our clinic despite the offer of a more lucrative position in one of New York's maternity hospitals, indicate qualities of staunch friendship and disinterested selflessness that are essential qualities for the successful carrying on of the clinical work. In addition, she has had to withstand abuse and misrepresentation that emanates even from members of her own profession.

In 1925, I also succeeded in persuading another member of the medical profession, Dr. James F. Cooper, to join our ranks and to go into the field as lecturer to medical societies. I was convinced that we must go into the States to reach the hearts of the medical profession and that we must get them to assist us in the battle for a new humanity. Dr. Cooper was an able speaker. He had been trained in the Boston Medical School, and had specialized in gynecology. His work as a medical missionary in Foo Chow, China, fitted him for the task of winning to our cause that vast body of men and women upon whose service, and knowledge, and understanding, this movement must rise or fall.

The salary demanded by Dr. Cooper was considered too much for our organization, with its board of directors of charming women whose instinctive reaction to new activities was always negative. Finally I was able to persuade a noble friend, again a man, who believed sufficiently in me, in my vision and in my direction of the cause, to pledge the money for Dr. Cooper's salary and expenses for the year.

In January 1925, Dr. Cooper went out into the field. He covered nearly all of the states in the Union. Reports of his good work came from every place in which he spoke, and in 1926 I again sent him on tour to gather medical supporters to our cause.

In his lectures, which totaled more than seven hundred those two years, Dr. Cooper expounded not only the theory but the practice of contraception. He took necessary supplies, devices, and charts with him, and instructed the physicians in the technique and application of the methods.

These contacts made it possible for me to decentralize my

personal work. In other words, I was now able to refer mothers who wrote letters of appeal—there were fifty to eighty thousand of these each year—to a doctor in their vicinities.

This removed a great burden from my conscience. It is practically impossible to advise a woman in the most suitable method of contraception by letter of pamphlet. Advice and instruction in pamphlets was too general to guarantee satisfaction to the individual woman, and only by physical examination of the generative organs could a contraceptive be advised and properly recommended. Thus I was accomplishing a two-fold task of future importance: educating the medical profession by sending a missionary to its very doors, and collecting facts of human physiological, economic, medical and social aspects of birth control directly from the patients who sought from us information to prevent conception at our clinical bureau.

About the time Dr. Stone and Dr. Cooper came into the field, another group of medical men were organizing for research and collection of scientific facts on fertility and sterility. The Maternal Health Committee of New York City, with Dr. Robert L. Dickinson as executive secretary, has made great inroads into the profession by its staunch, courageous adherence to the principles of the subject and its acceptance of the responsibility that birth control instruction is primarily a doctor's job. With the expansion and growth of the Maternal Health Committee, we can safely feel that it is only a question of time until that vast body will include contraceptive instruction as a preventive measure in its public work.

Each year the number of patients at the clinic increased. Doctors from far and near came to be instructed in our methods. Humbly the great ones came to learn; younger members of the profession especially came to enquire. We have on our books today the names of several hundred who have visited the clinic and learned from our staff the technique of contraception.

An office building soon became inadequate for our growing

needs, and in 1926 we moved our Clinical Bureau to 46 West Fifteenth Street, on the ground floor where mothers could be neighborly and bring their baby carriages. Two floors were engaged to accommodate the increasing demands. Every day brought more women to our doors than we could provide instruction for. Women came from all over the country; and like those of Brownsville they came from all classes.

On March 23, 1929, a woman came to the Clinical Research Bureau, and was registered as Mrs. Tierny. She made an appointment to be examined, and on the appointed day was instructed by Dr. Elizabeth Pissoort, one of our several staff physicians. Her clinical record card indicated her answers to the questions asked. "Mrs. Tierny" claimed that she was the mother of three children, the oldest five years old and the youngest less than a year; that her husband earned $40.00 per week as truck driver, and that he was addicted to drink. The medical examination took place on April 3. Contraceptive instruction, this examination revealed, was fully indicated. Supplies were furnished; and the woman returned on April 10 for a check-up by Dr. Hannah Stone, our medical director.

Five days later a squad of seven police descended upon the Bureau, and for alleged violation of Section 1142 of the Penal Code (the same statute invoked for the raid thirteen years before of the Brownsville Clinic) arrested Dr. Stone, Dr. Pissoort, and three nurses employed in the bureau: Miss Antoinette Field, Mrs. Sigrid Breastwell and Mrs. Marcella Sideri. "Mrs. Tierny" was as a matter of fact none other than Mrs. Anna K. McNamara, a policewoman! Our clinical records reeval to what lengths, to what depths, this woman was willing to go in her effort to gain evidence to close the doors of this Clinical Bureau.

It was, however, another policewoman, Mary Sullivan, who directed the raid. It was staged with every attention to spectacular effect. A police automobile drew up at the door of our modest establishment in West Fifteenth Street. Two policewomen, assisted by six plain clothes police officers, entered with a complete absence of ceremony. Fifteen poor, timorous

THE DOORWAY

women were waiting patiently for the doctors' instruction. The police bullied and intimidated them, not without first forcing them to give their names and addresses, as if they were criminals. Not content with arresting the five conscientious women who were working there, they seized all available materials and doctors' case records. Several bundles of doctors' supplies were piled into the wagon and taken to the police station with the doctors and nurses.

When notified by my secretary over the telephone, I hastened to the door of the Clinical Bureau that mild April morning. I found it locked, and a police officer within barring it against my entrance.

"You can't get in here!" he brusquely announced, opening the door just enough to send out his contemptuous words. "This place is shut!"

"Oh yes I can!" I retorted. "I am the owner of this place and I intend to get in."

I kept my foot against the door and waited. The officer passed my request along to a superior, and I heard some one answer him: "If it's Mrs. Sanger, let her come in."

Our orderly and attractive reception room, as well as the more private offices, had been thrown into confusion by the raiders. Even now they were rushing aimlessly about like chickens fluttering about a raided roost. One man was standing with pad and pencil in hand bellowing at a pathetic intimidated woman patient, trying to get her name and address. Beside her a little child was trembling with fear, gazing intently up at the mother's face as if waiting for a cue to burst into screams.

I knew the purpose of this interrogation, and I knew as well our rights in the case.

"Don't be afraid, little mother," I said to the trembling woman, approaching her calmly. "No one can harm you. You will not be arrested, and you need not give your name if you do not care to. Just sit down quietly in this chair and everything will soon be settled."

I turned to the other women and quieted them, and then

took up the matter of the arrest with one of the policewomen —the very "Mrs. Tierny" who had obtained the evidence. This energetic policewoman was madly turning over the case-records, as fast as her fingers could travel. She seemed to have an eye for certain special cards.

I protested against her invasion of our records. She replied that she had a search warrant permitting her to do so. I called for this warrant and insisted upon seeing it. After a few moments Mrs. Mary Sullivan produced the warrant, and I discovered that it had been signed by Chief Magistrate McAdoo.

As I read that warrant, I must admit, I was almost crushed. In my hurried review of the document it seemed to be a wholesale warrant empowering these ignorant vandals to seize anything their clumsy hands fell upon—to destroy in a few moments the order that had required months to build up. Nevertheless as I stood there watching those eager, vindictive hands scoop up the doctors' records one by one with a barbaric, angry glint of triumph in her eyes, I protestingly warned the woman:

"You're going to get yourself into more trouble than you suspect if you interfere with those records."

"Trouble?" she snapped back, "—and what about you?"

"I can take care of myself," I answered.

Doctors and nurses were herded into the patrol wagon, the police refusing to permit them to ride to the station in a taxi-cab. When one of the officials protested with Mrs. Sullivan, she shouted at him: "Say, this is *my* party!" If I had not secured an attorney immediately, they would have been fingerprinted like common criminals. At every step, these officers abused their authority. In view of recent revelations of police corruption, this is not surprising, and it aroused bitter indignation at that time.

Ironically enough, one phase of the raid—that of violation of the long-recognized immunity of confidential case records—which could have been eliminated so easily, on my own advice, turned the tables against the authorities. Even Chief Magis-

trate McAdoo, whose signature was affixed willingly to the warrant permitting the invasion, finally had to admit, in a public statement, that the police had exceeded the warrant's authority. He requested that all seized articles, except the case history of Mrs. McNamara, be returned to his office.

And here was a peculiar thing, a mystery never officially solved. About forty cards and six books were returned to the Chief Magistrate, leaving some 150 cards unaccounted for. To this day they are still unaccounted for. What use the police department might have had for them, or to whom they might have been of interest, no one can say—no one, that is, who *will*. For months after the trial was over Mr. Ernst and I investigated, questioned, demanded. Those cards still repose in a secret hiding place or have been destroyed beyond incriminating possibilities, and, however we may suspect certain persons and agencies, there is no legal way for us to regain our stolen property.

Incidentally, it is worth noting in passing that several women patients whose cards were thus purloined have come to us pleading that we shall not use their names publicly as patients of the Clinical Research Bureau. Upon being questioned, they confessed that they had received mysterious and anonymous telephone calls telling them that if they continued to go to the clinic their cases would be exposed in the newspapers. They happened to be Roman Catholic mothers, whose case cards were taken and never returned.

We have not been able to trace the others, because their names and addresses are lacking. From private and authentic sources we were told that the suggestion for this raid on the Bureau came from Mrs. Mary Sullivan from high Church authorities. Cardinal Hayes' advice had been asked by Catholic social workers as to what answer to give Catholic mothers who wished to go to the Clinical Research Bureau as patients.

The most intense public indignation was aroused by the seizure of our confidential records and case histories. "If the police can seize doctors' and lawyers' general files," protested the *Herald Tribune,* "without a specific warrant and paw over

them in search of possible evidence, the privileged relation of doctor and client ceases to exist. The possibilities of abuse, including blackmail, are virtually unlimited. Even those doctors who have not agreed with the general position of the birth control clinic are likely to protest against such arbitrary police invasion of medical privacy."

Under the direction of Morris L. Ernst, brilliant and impassioned attorney, whose name had been associated with the defense of many liberal causes, a committee was formed to protect the rights of the five women.

More than 500 distinguished persons, some old friends and many new ones, openly gave us their support. Their names lend added dignity to our case—names like those of the Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, Rev. Karl Reiland, former Health Commissioner Louis L. Harris, Dr. Walter Timme, Samuel Untermyer, Mrs. Otto Kahn, Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt, Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, Mrs. Ogden Mills Reid, Mrs. Henry Phipps, Mrs. Henry Morgenthau, Jr., and Mr. and Mrs. Corliss Lamont. Newspapers and magazines published scathing editorials criticizing the police department. It was heartening to note that not one publication praised the police for their action. Not one report of the proceedings in court failed to betray sympathy with the five women who had been humiliated in the course of their humane activities.

Police Commissioner Grover A. Whalen, then embroiled in an embarrassing, futile investigation of the murder of the notorious gambler named Arnold Rothstein, called the raid of the birth control clinic "a routine matter." Eventually Mr. Whalen himself changed his mind, and indited an apology to the directors of New York Academy of Medicine. For all his light talk, the people of New York had failed to regard this raid as routine. Everywhere one went that first week, and afterwards, talk centered around the case. As the story unfolded, emotions ran high.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the decoy patient, Mrs. McNamara, was made to appear in a sinister light to the general public. She admitted, in the course of the trial,

that she had set out deliberately to deceive the doctors of the birth control clinic. She had made three visits to 46 West Fifteenth Street, she said, and as she testified her stolid face turned from pink to purple. She had pretended that she was the mother of three children aged five, three and one, although actually she had two childrens in their teens. Her husband made $40 a week as a truck driver, she had said, which he spent largely for drink. She wanted to avoid having any more children, she had told Dr. Pissoort, who examined her and gave her the desired information plus a device to prevent conception. Dr. Pissoort also gave her some gratuitous medical advice that her teeth needed expert attention. On the basis of this scientific interview the raid came.

It was small wonder that sympathies were with us during the trial. We had always had our ardent supporters, but this time we had the populace. At the preliminary hearing on April 19th about 500 men and women assembled in Magistrate Rosenbluth's courtroom, packing the benches, lining the walls, and betraying their enthusiasm continuously. Many prominent physicians came to testify for us if needed, and at least three-fourths of the onlookers were women, most of whom I had never seen before.

The magistrate, an hour and a quarter later, adjourned the case forty minutes after he had opened it, hearing but one witness, Mrs. McNamara. His conduct of the proceedings brought a letter of protest from Mrs. Ethel E. Dreier, president of the Women's City Club, who accused him of procrastination.

In the courtroom itself I could discern an intense critical attitude quite different from anything exhibited at previous demonstrations for the birth control movement. When Mr. Ernst sought to question Mrs. McNamara closely, the magistrate reminded him that she was a policewoman, apparently as such not required to tell all. Murmurs circulated throughout the spectators' portion of the courtroom. The sound was melodious to ears accustomed to harsh and suspicious accents only twelve years before. To me, every step in the legal pro-

cedure following the raid was an amazing revelation of progress—the fruit of long, steady plodding, the response of an awakened conscious interest which up to then had been strangely silent. As the hearing progressed, the enthusiasm of onlookers grew to such bounds that at one time Magistrate Rosenbluth had to send them from the courtroom. This was during the testimony of Dr. Harris, of the New York Health Department.

"The birth control clinic is a public health work," averred Dr. Harris on the stand. "Every woman coming for treatment is asked if she is married. If she is not, then she is rejected by the doctors."

Magistrate Rosenbluth leaned forward heavily. "Does the clinic send out social workers to discover the truth of patients' statements?" he asked.

"Did you ever know of a situation where a doctor dispatched a detective to find out whether his patient was married?" demanded Mr. Ernst.

A wave of applause by the spectators engulfed the room.

"Unless there is absolute silence, I shall clear the courtroom!" bellowed the judge; and then, seeming to grow angrier, he added: "On second thought, I shall clear it anyhow. Out you go!"

This was, if anything, the dramatic climax of the trial; for the actual result was so well known in advance that it brought little spontaneous emotion. As the spectators filed from the courtroom, they shouted and booed and sang: "Sweet land of liberty!" One of them, our own veteran worker Kitty Marion, cried: "Land of the dumb driven cattle!" and was widely quoted for it. The emotions of a mob had been awakened, and pandemonium ensued.

After the withdrawal of the spectators, the trial proceeded. A few minutes later, a fifteen minute recess was ordered by the judge. It seemed a mere coincidence that when court convened again the magistrate readmitted the public. We learned afterward that in the interim a number of women had proceeded to the office of Chief Magistrate McAdoo, who

accordingly reversed Magistrate Rosenbluth's ruling barring the spectators. At the end of the hearing the magistrate reserved the decision until May 14. Two days before the announcement of his decision, Mary Sullivan was demoted as head of the Policewomen's Bureau. Captain S. P. Brady, a lawyer, was made director. Commissioner Whalen admitted, when pressed, that the raid was responsible for Mrs. Sullivan's fall from grace. She had not consulted him about her purposed action, and in something "so important," said the man who had termed it "routine," she should have sought his advice.

"Captain Brady's legal training will help him not to make mistakes, I trust," the Commissioner is reported to have said.

Mrs. Sullivan was very much surprised at the order. Reporters calling at her home found her utterly unprepared for such a move, warm in her reiteration that it could have had nothing to do with the birth control matter. But she certainly must have known the tide was turning against her, for after a silent appearance at the preliminary hearing of the five women she never attended another hearing. In addition, she flatly refused all along to reveal the reasons for the investigation she had ordered Mrs. McNamara to make. When asked whether it was due to Roman Catholic Church orders, she refused to answer. When her surprise at the demotion had died down, her attitude was one of calm acceptance. It was pointed out that in spite of her disgrace her salary remained the same; and the formation of a Crime Commission in the police department, with a social worker, a woman, to supervise the work of the policewomen was regarded as a mere "blind" until such time when the birth control case would be forgotten and Mary Sullivan actually, if not technically, reinstated.

A day after Mrs. Sullivan's demotion, the first public expression of approval of the raid was made—obscurely, to be sure, but enlighteningly. The Rev. Francis X. Talbot, S. J., editor of *America,* a Roman Catholic publication, said at a communion breakfast of the Holy Name Society in Jersey

City that the raid had been justified. He condemned Mayor Walker for allowing the demotion of Mrs. Sullivan, and explained that the Roman Catholics had been very busy at the task of "keeping God in the country."

We were prepared for Magistrate Rosenbluth's discharge of the two doctors and three nurses. He wrote an admirably clear, fair, and definite résumé of actualities, and his decision was one of the finest we have ever won. In substance he said the prosecution had not shown lack of good faith on the part of our doctors in treating Mrs. McNamara.

"Good faith in these circumstances is the belief of the physician that the prevention of conception is necessary for a patient's health and physical welfare. That Mrs. McNamara came to the defendants in an avowed search for a means of preventing conception and disclosed that purpose to the defendants, does not of itself furnish a basis for an inference of bad faith on the part of the defendants. It may well be that, in spite of her purpose to search out and beguile a suspected violator of the statute, Mrs. McNamara's physical condition as disclosed only to the doctor defendant made their advice and instructions to use the contraceptive entirely necessary to prevent disease."

In his column Heywood Broun called attention to the fact that our clinic had been in operation for more than six years; that it had been conducted under the direction of reputable physicians entirely familiar with the laws concerning the dissemination of contraceptive information; and that my former conviction in 1917 had proved a very useful "sacrifice," which had advanced the cause of birth control. Following that conviction the courts had ruled that physicians could give information to prevent or cure disease. A precedent was at last established.

The lone battle had been won, now that reinforcement had come from indignant and distinguished individuals in the New York Academy of Medicine. Mary Sullivan's "party" ushered in a new support for the cause.

XXV

PARTING OF THE WAYS

UPON my return to New York in 1928, after an absence of eighteen months, I soon came to realize that while there had been a gain in the worldwide movement through the World Population Conference at Geneva, the local situation through the activities of my own organization in New York had taken on a new direction.

Step by step, I had built up a national organization based on an ever-growing public opinion which was coming to recognize the importance of contraception in the social problems of every community from coast to coast—the problems of organized charities, of juvenile delinquency, of poverty and crime, which exact so heavy a toll from the taxpayers of every American town and country. My supporters were those who came to look upon birth control not from the point of view of any "new" conception of public morals, but as a means of solical economics. They wanted to lessen the toll exacted by the delinquent, the defective and dependent elements of American society in order that these funds might be used for furthering the opportunities of the promising children.

The list of adherents was made up of the names of distinguished scientists, scholars, ministers, doctors and social workers in every forward-looking community.

I had also acquired the sanction of the State of New York by securing the incorporation of the League under the membership laws of the state. How little did those who had entered this movement at the eleventh hour realize how much time and energy had been expended upon the drawing up of the aims and principles of the league, how much effort in scattering and broadcasting constructive stimulating suggestive plans throughout the land to the various social and educational agencies—all with the aim of stimulating thought and discussion on birth control. Then, too, there were the countless "drives" inaugurated—upon religious bodies of various denominations, upon civic organizations, women's clubs, men's clubs, universities. All this had been going on during the years preceding when the newspapers were printing stories of the more spectacular skirmishes and battles carried on by the loyal and hard-working office force and directors I had gathered about me.

While I knew the weaknesses of organizations and the stifling effect they could have on spiritual evolution, still I liked to organize and to feel the satisfaction one has in doing a big and difficult thing well. I had succeeded in building up an organization which had not been caught in its own mechanism to become a dead weight of routine and red tape, as organizations without leadership might—and often did, in fact—become, thus defeating the very purpose for which they were initially established. Guarding against this type of bureaucracy with its checks upon enthusiastic action, I had from the beginning of my battles instinctively sought to build up an effective staff—a little army that could carry on the fight by the intensity of its loyalty to our ideal.

This I had succeeded in doing by friendship and by inspiring faith in my own ideals. That I had succeeded was evidenced by the number of men and women who had "stuck" through thick and thin—and who are still at my side.

Long experience had sharpened my judgment of character. I have, I admit, been too ready to accept people's opinion of themselves, too willing to accept and believe the best in human beings. I am not of a suspicious nature, nor am I a "boss" in the sense of prying into motives or tracking employees early and late to check up on their time and occupations. If I believed in persons at all, I believed in them fully and wholly and gave them the opportunity of developing their initiative and proving their ability.

My father said that I had organized something ever since I could talk, by which he doubtless meant that I had got the members of the family to band together with me to get something I wanted to have.

Now there was to our credit the creation of a large organization, a monthly magazine, leaflets, pamphlets, books, speakers, friends and supporters. I had organized and taken part in the organization of more than fifteen national and international conferences on birth control, and find this the best test of one's ability to cooperate.

Now, however, I found myself confronted by an unexpected crisis. During my absence from the country the American Birth Control League had developed a tendency to settle down into a more or less routine form of endeavor. The pioneer days of our initial aggressive activity were to be superseded by a more or less doctrinaire program of social activity. In my estimation the movement had gone beyond the parlor meeting stage. It had grown strong enough to face its battles in the open. It had gained the backing of a public opinion based on reason and intelligence. But rapidly it became apparent to me that the very machinery one had to build up in organization, efficient as it was for routine results, could be a drag or a weight upon effective, spontaneous, aggressive action.

The first event of importance which conflicted with long-range vision and my aggressive policy, and more than any other one act convinced me of this, was when we were barred from the booth which we had contracted for at the Parents'

Exhibition in Grand Central Palace in 1928. We were entirely prepared to take our place beside other civic and educational agencies in the city of New York. Then Mr. William O'Shea, Superintendent of Public Schools in this city, seeing our name above the booth we had rented and engaged and contracted for, demanded that we be ousted from the exhibit and threatened to withdraw from the activities unless this was done. The impertinence, the audacity, the bullying tactics of this Irish Catholic spokesman demanded our ejection. Our contract was to be broken and our rights trampled ruthlessly under foot by the command of an intolerant official.

My instinctive action was to use the machinery of the law as the means to protect our rights. At once I consulted an attorney. I asked him to secure an injunction in the courts to prevent them from excluding us. In consulting this attorney, I was acting on my own, as there was not time to get into action the machinery of my own organization. Here I felt anew the hampering effect of by-laws and rulings and the waste of precious time in consulting individuals, well-meaning enough but utterly lacking in vision or resourcefulness in time of emergency. By the time a meeting of the Board was called to consider and get consent to act, the case was more hopelessly complicated. The check which paid for space had been returned by the committee and the doors of the exhibit had already been opened to the public. Our opportunity to force the issue had been lost by our own delay and by the Board's timid indecision.

Here then was an internal conflict which had to be considered and dealt with wisely. It was a question of policy and principle, based on persons' lives whose experience had been as vastly different as the North and South Poles. To me, this cause was a living inspiration and interest. It was not a "hobby." It was no mere "filler" in a busy social life. It was not something that could wait on this or that mood. Its interest came first in my waking consciousness and was my last thought as I lost consciousness at night. To me it was a big vital, living job which called for all one had to give.

To the other members of the Board it was only one of many other interests. Their activities were divided, their time had to depend upon what was left from social duties. Husbands, children, dressmakers, servants, charities, church, entertainment, all had claims on those who now began to dictate to me the policy the League was to take.

The growth of the movement had to a considerable extent thrived and depended on the skill of taking advantage of the stupid tactics of our bullying enemies. This skill had been called forth in our earliest battles: in the challenging defiance of *The Woman Rebel;* in every step of that legal conflict with the Federal authorities; in the founding of the Brownsville Clinic; in Mrs. Byrne's hunger strike; in the tremendous aftermath of the Town Hall raid of incalculable educational value for the American public; in the long drawn out and finally victorious skirmish with the Japanese Government; in the establishment of the Clinical Research Bureau and the subsequent raid by the police; in challenging laws and defending aggressively our rights. These and other battles had been precipitated without the permission of any board of directors. With no little amusement I found that during my absence our bank account had grown. This was a telling point in a new development. Money actually in the bank! Thousands of dollars! There it was—actually there! Drawing interest, too! What relief that was to a board whose past experience at every meeting was to hear wails from the president and treasurer as to our needs. My policy was to spend, not to save. I believed that money had been contributed to spend wisely at work for the expansion and growth of the movement, not to draw interest in a bank when work was needing to be done. I know that apathy which comes from a good bank account in public agencies. I know that attitude of tacit disapproval toward every suggestion which is going to disturb that precious sum!

In my opinion funds were given to support the life of the movement, to maintain interest, to mobilize the army of public opinion and the press at critical moments, to enlighten the

medical profession concerning the importance of birth control, to secure cooperation of women's and men's organizations—in fact, to awaken, to direct, to lead out, to expand, to grow! With this in mind I had founded the *Birth Control Review* as an educational instrument for the development and growth of the movement; I had secured the services of a medical man to go into the field and inform the medical profession in the various states of the Union as to the technique of contraception; I had organized conferences and carried the idea into every important city from coast to coast. Twelve years of experience had taught me that from its inception the birth control movement had progressed and advanced by a series of battles, by aggressive and defensive campaigns which must be conducted fearlessly with vision and with faith. I realized now that these campaigns could never have been waged had I been tied to or hampered in my activities by individuals or boards or committees lacking the understanding or appreciation of these qualities.

The tide of public opinion had begun to turn in favor of birth control. It was being tolerated as a social necessity as well as a constructive instrument in morality. Never before was there such an opportunity for organizing the nation to bear upon Congress and legislatures in the various states to effect legislation. It became more apparent to me that a person like myself whose contribution to the movement had been aggressive pioneering was now needed in the national field to organize a campaign to effect legislation in Congress. State and Federal laws hampered our progress. I believed that they must be changed, that it was our duty while interest was on the wing to get them changed and to secure such legislation as would enable us to hand down to posterity a constructive program for a better race.

Conflict of opinions reigned—opinions of policy, opinions as to forms of legislation, the "open bill" or the "doctors' bill," opinions as to state or Federal action. Regretfully I found that the organization I had built up by years of work, effort and influence was to sidestep the greatest and most important

and immediate activity in a national effort to secure a Federal amendment.

To come to any decision was an effort. Could I give over to the direction of others this precious child of long labor? Not only the League, but the life of the *Review* was in jeopardy. Could or would any living parent or mother pass over in full consciousness the future care, the life of this child which had become a vital part of her very being? I asked myself this question, but no answer came. Day after day, incidents accumulated. Words, actions, innuendoes, suggestions began to take on meaning; and finally after months of misgivings the answer came. I would give complete freedom to others to carry on as they saw best, in order to obtain a new freedom for myself. The battle was by no means over, but our lines of defense had to be changed. The parting of the ways was inevitable.

Two things needed to be done: to redirect attention and effort to the reorganization of the Clinical Research Bureau, which had been a sort of orphan child in my absence, and to launch an aggressive campaign for Federal legislation, which I had begun in 1914. To do these meant a separation of interests of the Board. There was no need to regret the division of work, and I realized that in order to get you must give, in order to hold you must let go. Those friends who had fought with me throughout the years, Mrs. Juliet Barrett Rublee, Mrs. Frances B. Ackermann, Mrs. Ida Timme, resigned with me, as did Rev. William Garth, and Mrs. Lewis L. Delafield loyally offered to come with me but her greater usefulness to the movement could be obtained by remaining.

Throughout this internal conflict my interest had been vitalized and my faith sustained by the contact with the real problems of mothers, the women of the people. From the early days of Brownsville they had remained loyal, and in contrast with the superficial and fleeting interest of other women I had come in contact with, the tragedy of their lives came to me now with more poignant intensity. Over a

million letters from America's inferno had been addressed to me personally from the beginning of the movement—appeals for personal help. Never before in the history of humanity had there been such testimony concerning the business of being a mother, never before such social documentation. It had required a regular staff to classify and answer these letters. I decided to make a selection of them and to print them in a book, only removing the names and other evidences of identification. These voices of maternity's underworld rang in my ears as a sort of chorus of mothers in Greek tragedy—except that it was a modern American tragedy, a tragedy of the here and the now, though as grim, as relentless, as racial as any ever staged in ancient Athens. These voices, these letters, as well as the mothers of the poor I met, gave me a sense of the pressing immediacy of the problem. Could I get these mothers to help me? Could I get them to address their appeals to Congress and together batter down these barriers to their freedom? Here then was my inspiration, for more than ever birth control was no mere theory supported by columns of statistics or decorated by impressive graphs, no mere matter of population problems viewed through the wrong end of a scientific telescope, a theory remote and clear-cut. It was a matter of life and death in these lives caught in the toils of a powerful instinct.

Thus it was that I turned away from the presidency of the American Birth Control League to take up the difficult task of the Federal work of changing the laws and to outline a program to stimulate research through the Clinical Research Bureau, directing it toward the perfecting of contraceptive technique, urging scientists and specialists to focus their attention upon this problem and to set up bureaus for the purpose of testing their achievements.

So after seven years of organizing and directing the activities of the League, I left it with an enviable position of respect in the country, with a total corresponding membership of over sixty thousand. The *Review* had a circulation of twelve to

thirteen thousand, we had never been in debt, and our credit was good in all circles. As I looked over the spacious, well aired and lighted office at 104 Fifth Avenue where I had spent the best part of twelve years, the words of the poet came to my mind:

Hail and farewell! Farewell and hail!

XXVI

SURVEY: 1930-1931

NOW came a period in my life when I reached a height from which I could survey, as it were, the international landscape; from which I could discern the harvest of the seeds I had sown. Not only in my own country, but in the Far East and in Europe, the tide of public opinion and of religious thought was inevitably turning so that eventually it would sweep away prejudice and opposition.

From its inception in 1914, when those significant words "birth control" threw a completely new light upon the whole question of sociology as well as upon what used to be known academically as Neo-Malthusianism, this movement had progressed by a series of battles. It was truly a series of battles and victories—victories, I must admit, not always clearly defined, and battles that often had to be fought over with new tactics and new armies, as I think the record of these pages sufficiently indicates.

A new turn in the battle took place when on August 15, 1930, the Anglican Bishops, at the Lambeth Conference in

London, by a vote of 193 to 67, passed a resolution that was to reverberate throughout the Christian world. Shortly afterward there followed, as if precipitated by this resolution, the publication of the Pope's Encyclical condemning in round terms the practice of contraception, thus unequivocally defining the Catholic sexual dogma, and which was inevitably to lead the way toward the crystallization of a universal Protestant acceptance of the moral necessity of birth control.

These Anglican Bishops, assembling in London from all parts of the world, and thus representing the most influential body of Protestant Episcopal churchmen, put their sanction upon the practice of birth control in the following statement:

"Where there is a clearly felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood, the method must be decided on Christian principles. The primary and obvious method is complete abstinence from intercourse so far as may be necessary in a life of discipline and self-control.

"Nevertheless, in those cases where there is such a clearly felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood and where there is morally sound reason for avoiding complete abstinence, the conference agrees that other methods may be used, provided this is done in the light of the same Christian principles."

Certainly a conservative statement from a conservative body, but its weighty significance was not lost upon the British and American press. The New York *World* pointed out that the House of Bishops had been urged to take this action by our old friend and defender Lord Dawson of Penn, who pleaded with the clerics not to condemn a method widely practiced by intelligent and conscientious members of the Church. It was ironical, though illuminating, that the 67 opposing votes were cast by colonial and missionary bishops from distant quarters of the Empire where no educational propaganda had been carried on. Of the ethical vindication, Dean Inge, whose approval of this work and whose cordial letters to me had always been a source of gratification, wrote: "Now it is admitted for the first time that the morality of an act depends

on the motive, and men and women must judge for themselves whether the motive for wishing to limit their families is of purely Christian standards or not . . . Birth control has come to stay. The only course open to the Church is that which the Bishops have now taken—to bring the practice before the tribunal of sensitive and enlightened conscience."

Of course there were those, like the irrepressible Bernard Shaw, who saw the whole thing as just an attempt to see whether the Church could be brought into some relation with modern views, a belated attempt to catch up with the twentieth century.

I realized, however, that it was the beginning of the movement of age-long obstacles. It had required years of tireless efforts to remove the boulders in the pathway into the future. But once we had begun to move them, the heaviest of them would gain in momentum and carry lesser impedimenta with them. This feeling was fortified almost immediately by the news that the British Ministry of Health gave permission for the dissemination of contraceptive instruction in maternity and child welfare centers. Things were beginning to move indeed. I saw again new evidence of the power of an idea turning in our favor, and the predictions I ventured to English friends at that time (we were in Zürich for our Seventh International Birth Control Conference, in September) have almost become realities.

As I write, comes from England the news that Mr. Greenwood, Labour Minister of Health, has at last approved the establishment of independent birth control clinics conducted under government auspices, and sharply differentiated from the maternity and child welfare centers. This sanction carries the provision "that the clinics will be available only for women who are in need of medical advice and treatment for gynecological conditions, and that advice on contraceptive methods will be given only to married women who attend the clinics for such medical advice or treatment and in whose cases pregnancy would be detrimental to health."

Here again was occasion for rejoicing. I knew that despite

the restrictions, the disappointing qualification, this plan was an entering wedge. Establishment of clinics means the opportunity for concrete demonstration of their value to society at large. It means the opportunity for the collection of invaluable data, and provides the basis for coordinated effort, for the correlation of findings. It sets a precedent for other governments to study and eventually to follow.

The British Medical Association, almost immediately upon the statement of the Anglican Bishops at Lambeth, issued an independent statement to the effect that they would not be influenced by the prejudices of either side.

A Bureau of International Information has recently been established, with headquarters in London, under the directorship of Mrs. Edith How-Martyn, pioneer worker for birth control as well as a suffrage and Malthusian veteran who had fought with Mrs. Pankhurst and Dr. Alice Vickery. We have branch centers located in various cities with special correspondents to keep headquarters informed of the events and progress in each country. This bureau has a definite function of popularizing the theories of population among the common people. It will doubtless have a permanent place in world progress in birth control.

England, let us confess, has taken the lead in the dissemination of Malthusian doctrines. It is taking the lead in birth control today. It first recognized the significance of the fight I was making; it hailed me in my darkest hours with words of friendship, of understanding, of cheer.

Meanwhile, in America there were other events that were counter-balancing the indignation caused by the raid of the birth control clinic in New York the year previous. The Central Conference of American Rabbis had urged the recognition of the importance of birth control and had recommended its study. The Eastern Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church had endorsed birth control in its April conference. A special commission appointed by the Presbyterian General Assembly to study the problems of divorce and remarriage had admitted the desirability of restricting

births under medical advice by the use of contraceptive methods. The American Unitarian Association had adopted resolutions endorsing birth control.

From distant Japan my friend Baroness Shidzue Ishimoto wrote these encouraging words: "It is eight years since you visited Japan and called Japan's attention to the importance of birth control. Many serious efforts are being made by far sighted and progressive people to bring this gospel to suffering families." Finally, Mr. U. Shirakami announced a new social policy of taking up birth control as a weapon against poverty. The health department of the city of Tokyo decided to set up birth control clinics in the municipal Health Advice Stations, established in the congested slum districts of the city. Baroness Ishimoto added: "As the city of Tokyo has fairly well equipped medical facilities, the clinics will be run by competent experts, and safe, correct contraceptive methods will be developed in Japan. At the same time the group of social parasites who are selling ineffective medicines or injurious instruments to mothers will vanish. Fortunately, we in Japan have no religious conflict on the subject of birth control."

From the still farther East came more news. My former coworker Agnes Smedley, now in China, wrote that the Kuomintang Government was seriously considering birth control in the solution of China's complex problems. In Shanghai two leading hospitals volunteered quarters, staffs and equipment to educate physicians and nurses in contraceptive technique and in the direction of clinics. In Peiping, Sherwood Eddy tells me, in the thoroughly modern Union Medical College, he discovered the first completely up-to-date practice and equipment that he had discovered in the whole mainland of China.

Depressing enough, I know, is the outlook for China where millions of children are brought into existence without a ghost of a chance. But when we consider that the revolution there has created a new society, we need not be surprised at the rapidity with which China, once she grasps the

significance of this comparatively new instrument of civilization, will apply it to her needs.

The same thing is true, perhaps to a lesser extent, in India, where, despite the negative opposition of Mahatma Gandhi, birth control leagues have been organized in many cities and birth control clinics have been operating for some time. With the national congress of Indian women meeting recently, and the beginning at least of a feministic movement aiming toward the abolition of the traditional slavery of Indian women, we may hope for a recognition of the new instrument in their liberation.

While a quiet underground system of birth control education had gone on in Spain since my visit to that delightfully unspoiled country in 1915, it was not until 1928 that the first open public discussion on contraception took place, at the Medical University of San Carlos in Madrid. The ecclesiastical enemies of birth control protested, but now that the republic has been declared we may hope that the power of that hierarchy will be banished with the rest of the enemies to progress and that a new era of emancipation, hoped for by Lorenzo Portet and also by Francisco Ferrer, so tragically executed by the forces of reaction at Montjuich, will gradually be set up, and that the women of Spain will be the beneficiaries of the new republicanism.

As everywhere else, the law of supply and demand has been operative in this movement. The need for reliable methods has been far greater and more extended than the ability on the part of the medical profession or science to supply them. Not only in this country but in England and Germany and the other continental countries—with the possible exception of Russia—medical supplies have been inadequate to meet the popular demand. With this in mind, I called a conference of the professional and clinical workers of all countries in Zürich in September, 1930.

The Seventh International Birth Control Conference in Zürich marked a new stage in our work. It demonstrated that our work had emerged from the period of propaganda to that

of concrete service. For five days some one hundred and thirty physicians and directors of clinics from all parts of the world gathered to report on their work, to discuss problems of organization and technique, and to correlate their findings. It was a satisfaction to know that from the single clinic I had established in New York in 1916 and the few isolated attempts in this field in scattered European cities, there are now no less than fifty in the United States and practically the same number in Europe, exclusive of those uncertain ones in Holland; to be reminded, moreover, that hospitals are establishing contraceptive services, and that various governments and states are actually promoting birth control education through official agencies. Recalling the opposition of the Imperial Japanese Government which sought to exclude me only eight years before, it was in the nature of a triumph to be informed that Dr. K. Majima, organizer of a birth control center in Japan, had been sent to the Zürich conference as a official representative of that country.

It was also a satisfaction to hear from Dr. Martha Ruben-Wolf, a pioneer of the committee on birth control organized during my brief visit in Berlin in 1927, that the clinical work there is growing steadily and that over eighteen centers had been established for information.

It was encouraging to learn from Frau Stutzin that following the Zürich Conference several German and Swiss universities inaugurated plans to teach contraceptive technique in the medical curricula.

The spirit of earnestness with which all the delegates attended the sessions, the spirit of harmony and of international cooperation that prevailed throughout, were most gratifying. These men and women had gathered from the most strikingly contrasting social backgrounds. Their social and political ideals were in not a few cases diametrically opposed. Yet with rare tact they abstained from injecting these into the problems confronting them. They were subservient to the larger truth. And so, Malthusians or Marxians, conservatives or radicals, Catholics or Atheists, advocates of Capitalism or

Bolshevism, all were agreed on the necessity of concrete, practical work in contraception. For humanity's progress we marched onward. One left the conference convinced that here was the beginning of a new era in human progress, a technique of racial health inaugurated without fanfare of trumpets, without consideration of remote political ideals, but aiming to place the weapons of freedom in the hands of the individual himself, whatever his environment, whatever the condition of his previous servitude.

The resolutions passed indicate the nature of our deliberations and the present status of international opinion and aims.*

The Conference closed with a recognition of all present of the need for special study and research. Results tested through the medium of clinical cases are more necessary today than ever. As I sat listening to the animated discussions, again and again the thought came to my mind that this program of experiment and research would never have been possible had not the pioneers in this movement, scoffed at as propagandists, fought the way through the jungle of courts and jails, through the prejudice and ignorance which had to be cleared away before science could enter this new realm of endeavor.

At that conference a new concept of the needs for medical and laboratory research was formulated. As a result, representatives in Oxford, Cambridge and Edinburgh Universities are now at work seeking a solution for the problems that retard the real success of the movement. A young, enthusiastic new group of biologists and bio-chemists are now at work perfecting the science of contraception. They are developing new instruments to elevate this process from old-fashioned, almost archaic methods of the past. Since the days of Mensinga, some sixty years ago, the taboos surrounding the whole subject have to an almost incalculable extent impeded development in research. Doubtless the greatest achievement of the

* The Proceedings and Resolutions have been published by Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore, Md.

year was to stimulate scientific research in contraception. Encouraging new possibilities are becoming realities.

As I bring this record to a close, three outstanding and long fought for victories remain to be noted: The first is the very excellent report favoring birth control made public by the Committee on Marriage and the Home of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America;* the second is the publication of the Pope's Encyclical—a victory in that it focalizes the center of the opposition to birth control in the Roman Catholic Church (No one can any longer deny its agressive enmity); and the third, the statement of the New York Academy of Medicine acknowledging the demonstrated medical and social service of our clinical service and studies.*

Watching the trend of events from my point of vantage, I note especially the gradual yet persistent independence on the part of Catholic women in this country. I suspect that the demand for a clear statement (encyclical) came from this country as the most drastic tactics to control these women. I was informed that the Anglican statement had been the means of upsetting the apple-cart. Tactics aiming to bring about a reconciliation between Rome and the Church of England—which I was told in England had been going on for half a century—were rendered impossible by the stand of the Anglican Bishops. Protestant churches are making a call to universal intelligence.

Catholic men and women are bound to be affected by that call. We are all in the same current of evolution. Economic forces may vie for a time with religious influence, but eventually it wins out and determines the way the race shall go.

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* See Appendix.

XXVII

THE WAY TO THE END

MY FIGHT for birth control had begun, seventeen years previous, with a direct challenge to the iniquitous Section 211 of the Federal Penal Code. It will be recalled that this statute was invoked by the postmaster of New York City to suppress the *Woman Rebel*—it was declared unmailable because it tended to violate the text, which declared it a crime "to induce or to incite a person to so use or apply any article, instrument, substance, drug, medicines or thing to be used or applied for the prevention of conception." Was the battle now finally to be won with the amendment of that act which had been incorporated into our federal laws due to the long agitation of that flamboyant and pathological zealot Anthony Comstock? For fifty-eight years it has remained there, silently shackling the lives of American women, perpetuating suffering and physical torture, spreading the blight of biological tragedy because of its diabolical taboos.

Now, our "doctors' bill" had been introduced into the Senate by Senator Frederick Gillett, the venerable Republican senator

from Massachusetts, and a hearing was to be held before a sub-committee of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. The date was set for February 13, 1931. An appropriate day, it flashed through my mind, as I set out for Washington—so near the birthday of our great Emancipator, who had freed the slaves. Could we free women from the worse slavery in which they had been kept by the barbaric taboos imposed upon a whole nation by a weak-kneed Congress?

Glancing over that Section 211, as the train sped toward Washington, and at its corollaries, enacted the same year—Sections 311 and 312 of the Criminal Code and the act of Congress passed in 1909, all the old indignation that I felt twenty years ago flamed up anew into a white heat. With what diabolical skill that act had been worded! With what Machiavellian shrewdness it had been designed to prevent the circulation of scientific knowledge and methods! Forever, it linked contraception with obscenity—throwing dust into the eyes of the righteous in order to slip in the fallacy that conscious procreation was a vile, filthy and indecent practice. I nearly became a fanatical feminist again: men had passed this law . . . mature men had permitted themselves to be led like sheep to the slaughter. It made me doubt for a moment whether humans are even capable of making laws for the behaviour of their fellowmen. Where was the spirit of liberty, of toleration, of human compassion?

Well, I warned myself, it was a situation demanding tact, diplomacy, sweetness and light. Victories! At that moment they seemed as nothing to me, as long as that legislation remained on the federal codes. There were those, I knew, who were all for a clean sweep; but long experience had convinced me that it was a step-by-step fight—that it was all very well to denounce, to theorize, to analyze academic and philosophical aspects of the right and wrong of the problem. My task was to help those conscript mothers, to bring relief not with fine, soothing, eloquent words, but to prevent the recurrences of hopeless pregnancies, the conception of wan little lives that were all too soon snuffed out.

Therefore the amendment of the bill which aimed to place the whole matter of contraceptive education in the hands of competent physicians and clinics seemed the inevitable next step in federal legislation.

It was arranged that the sub-committee on "S. 4582" would meet in Room 212 of the Senate Office Building on the morning of Friday, February 13, when its proponents would speak in favor of the bill. The following morning seventeen opponents would be heard. The sub-committee consisted of Senators Gillett of Massachusetts, Sam G. Bratton of New Mexico, and William E. Borah of Idaho—but Senator Borah did not appear.

As we gathered in the room that February morning, I began to sense intuitively, like a veteran warrior, that it was to be a battle against the same old enemies—the silent enemies of that Brooklyn courtroom in which, fifteen years ago, I had been sentenced, the unseen enemies who gave the police orders to raid the Town Hall meeting in 1921, who had directed the ill-considered raid upon the Clinical Research Bureau in 1929. The Roman Catholic hierarchy of course; but along with them all the forces of reaction, the hopeless dogmatists of the ages; the conformists; the reactionaries—call them Lutherans or Puritans or Fundamentalists or Pharisees—all those for whom morality means merely blind subservience to custom and tradition, to a code completed and rigid once and for eternity. They explain every occurrence that inflicts unhappiness upon human life as "the will of God," be it disease, famine, flood, epidemic, poverty, starvation, unemployment, illiteracy, or feeble-mindedness.

They are the classes always ready and active to protect their own prejudices, to enforce their intolerant will upon the population at large. By suppression, by propaganda, by trickery, by treachery, by arrogant legislation, they achieve their ends. Many of them with their blatant loudspeaking are merely the mouthpieces of the wily directors of the Church—those evil shepherds who in turn take their orders from higher up. They are skilful in using the weapons of misrepresenta-

tion; yet they cover their intentions under high-sounding phrases of traditional morality and theology.

On the other side stand the forces of reason, of tolerance, of science—forces that embody more truly the spirit of Christ than the Church ever did; the spirit of helpfulness and of compassion, of infinite understanding of human suffering and human frailty. I am no theologian; but I am certain that it was never the intention of the founder of the Christian religion to impose a hard and set sexual code upon the human race. He who associated with sinners and publicans, who attached so little importance to the sins of the flesh, who emphasized so vividly that envy and avarice were more deadly sins than adultery, would find today his religion of love and brotherhood, of selflessness, I am sure, expressing itself in the disinterested attitude of scientific research, in the work of the clinics rather than in richly decorated cathedrals or pompous rituals chanted in a language of the past.

As I entered the Senate Office Building that windy February morning, and as the hearing was called to order by Senator Gillett, I knew that these old forces were once more aligned against us. There was the successor of St. Anthony Comstock himself, John Sumner of the Society for the Suppression of Vice; Canon William Chase of the National Reform Society; representatives of the World's Purity Federation; a delegate of the Southern Baptist Association; the secretary of the National Council of Catholic Women; Dr. Howard Kelly, Professor Emeritus of Gynecology in Johns Hopkins University, representing a type as obsolete as the theology of our ecclesiastic opponents. Here they all were, in serried ranks, driven out to open combat by the fear that the "doctors' bill" might be passed.

When a struggle has so completely absorbed one's time and activity as the struggle for the recognition of the legitimacy of birth control had absorbed mine for nearly twenty years, there seldom occurs an opportunity to observe the actual progress one has made. The hearing in Washington was important and encouraging from this point of view; it demonstrated that

the best minds and the most enlightened opinion of the country were standing staunchly behind us, had, as a matter of fact, joined the active battle with us. Here, at our side the previous day, stood Dr. J. Whitridge Williams, Obstetrician-in-Chief of Johns Hopkins University; Professor Roswell Johnson, Professor of Eugenics in the University of Pittsburgh; Rabbi Sidney Goldstein, of the Free Synagogue of New York; Mrs. Douglas Moffat, chairman of the legislative committee of the Junior League of New York City; Professor Henry Pratt Fairchild, sociologist, of New York University; Mrs. Thomas Hepburn, legislative chairman, of Hartford, Connecticut; and Rev. Charles Francis Potter, of the Humanist Church.

Our time was limited to one morning—a bare hour and a half—and so we were forced to limit the number of our defenders. The room was crowded with friends and opponents. Introduced by Mrs. Hepburn, our legislative chairman, I could touch only briefly on the evils wrought by the Comstockian legislation, upon the revolutionary changes wrought in the technique of contraception since 1873. I emphasized the manifest injustice of classifying scientific, medical information with pornographic writing or pictures. I roughly sketched the appalling effects of this law upon women and children: "Since this law was established in 1873," I stated in conclusion, "more than one million and five hundred thousand mothers have passed out beyond from causes due to child bearing, and we know today that the subject of contraception is intimately associated with the deaths of mothers and affects our maternal mortality.

"It is also roughly estimated that, since that law was passed, more than fifteen million children have passed out of life during their first year of infancy; many of them were children born in conditions of poverty and their mothers' ill health. A great majority of them might have been living to-day had their mothers had a chance to recuperate from the ordeal of previous pregnancy instead of using up the vitality of the child before it was born.

"We, Mr. Chairman, believe that the effect of keeping these laws on the statute book is to keep alive hypocrisy, evasion, and a general increasing disregard for laws. We believe that there is nothing to be gained by keeping such laws on the statute books when they are known to be inimical to the personal health of mothers, to the family happiness, and to the general welfare and progress of the Nation."

Then I presented a long list of organizations which indorsed the proposed amendment—medical boards and societies, welfare committees and settlements, philanthropic organizations and foundations, religious alliances, representing such denominations as the Episcopal, the Congregational, the Universalist, the Unitarian, and even the Methodist Episcopal Churches in various sections of the United States, political organizations and trade unions leagues. Other defendants of the amendment spoke on the specific advantages to be gained for the nation and the individual.

Our opponents, seventeen of whom were to be heard the following morning, waited impatiently. We were to be allowed only ten minutes at the conclusion of the hearing to rebut their arguments.

When we gathered again the following morning at the Senate Office Building, there was an air of tense excitement in Room 212. I had prepared myself to hear the stock conventional arguments against contraception; but I was not prepared for the shrewd trickery which our opponents used to combat us. The claim was made that three large and influential bodies were opposed to the present amendment. They named the American Federation of Labor, the American Medical Association, and the Methodist Episcopal Board of Public Morals.

Under examination by Senator Bratton, one speaker was forced to admit that the American Federation of Labor had never taken any action one way or the other on the subject of birth control. The other statements were equally misleading. As I sat there, compelled to listen to the doughty representatives of such organizations—indeed, I must confess that I had never dreamed of the existence of some of them!—

as the Patriotic Society, the Purity League, the Clean Books League, the Foresters, the I.O.O.F., the Knights of Columbus, I wondered how so much hypocrisy could be concentrated in one room, combined with so much stupidity and prejudice. It would require a Swift to describe how obtuse minds seem to exercise a natural affinity for each other and so combine and mobilize to search out any slight effort toward human advance and swoop down upon it in herds, trampling hopes and ideals into the mire. It was as though we were in some antediluvian age, some kingdom out of Gulliver's travels. Under these words, these exposures of medieval mental processes, one could only sit in amazement, enduring as best one could the flood of personal abuse, misrepresentation, deliberate prevarication and false statement. At the begining I had waited expectantly, anxious to learn what honest objections could be presented. I came indeed with an open mind, hoping that I might learn some new and honest point of view. But after an hour of these flatulent tirades, I gave it up. These Catholic medical authorities blundered naïvely into the realm of morals. In that field some church or other had acquired a monopoly on God's laws and Nature's, which, we were assured, were identical with patriotism and competitive procreation.

At last I closed my ears to this monotonous and repetitious chant of medieval dogmas and refused to listen. If I had hoped for a victory at this hearing, I knew that I had done so without sufficient consideration of these forces aligned against us. It was flattering to know that enlightened public opinion was with us. But such opinion, based on tolerance, is seldom militant. It does not fight. While the other type—the ignorant, the prejudiced, the intolerant, is always pugnacious, egotistic, self-assertive. Therefore it seems to be all-conquering in this poor democracy of ours.

Tiring of this incessant gabble, I closed the noise of the room from the inner chamber of my mind. I sat back to collect my own thoughts for the brief rebuttal that was to come. I could plainly hear the spasmodic groans of suffering womankind, cries of women in the agonies of childbirth, the

frenzy of mothers as in grief they looked for the last time upon the faces of lost babies. These sounds surged and beat a strange rhythm upon my subconscious mind until abruptly I was aroused by the voice of my friend Kate Hepburn. It was time for the rebuttal.

I arose in a sort of daze. Ten minutes to reply to countless ages of prejudice, to accumulated centuries of taboo, to milleniums of misrepresentation, to the whole past of the powers of darkness! Here was the Church, not the Church of Christ, but the Church of Rome, with its two thousand years or more of organization, of power, of secret intrigue and machinations, the Church that my father had combatted when I was only a little girl, the Church that had obstructed every effort of human emancipation, every step toward the stars—the Church that had sent me to jail. How could I answer it in ten minutes?

But, I reassured myself, ten minutes were ten minutes. Brief as they were they had been given to me to use to the best of my ability. After all, in the vast march of humanity out of darkness into light, my whole life, my entire effort was much less, relatively speaking, than these ten minutes. Yet if I had been able, despite all my obvious and admitted limitations, to point out the right direction, to prevent a racial stampede into certain disaster, it was not mine to complain against the few opportunities that had been given me. I had made the most of my opportunities in the past, and I had, I thought, been richly rewarded. I would take advantage of these ten minutes now.

These thoughts flashed through my mind in much less time than it takes to set them down. And almost before I had finished formulating them, I heard myself vigorously denying the misrepresentations of the opponents. The ten minutes were speeding furiously by. Yet their deliberate, complicated falsehoods required specific denial.

Almost as though they were ten seconds, those minutes were up. Senator Gillett graciously granted me five minutes more, and I went on, merely unburdening without thought the con-

victions of years: "We who are advocating this bill are trying to do away with the surreptitious and harmful information that is at present being spread around the country without being authorized, or controlled by experts who have the right to give it. I believe that the only way to do away with the harmful information which has been mentioned here this morning is to put the subject in the hands of the medical profession to be properly controlled.

"When some one says that the happiest families are the largest ones, and that the world's great leaders have been of large families, I would like to call to your attention that the great leader of Christianity, Jesus Christ himself, was said to be an only child."

Some of our opponents rose in horror, and made the sign of the Cross. There were cries of "Blasphemy!" Confusion reigned for a few moments, but I went on, more determined than ever.

"I am not going to take much time, but I want to say that the controversy really concerns the question of differing methods of birth control. The method of self-control recommended by some of those who are here to-day, is open to them. They may use such methods. We are not imposing any method upon any individual. There are about 120,000,000 people in this country, and I suppose that a large part of that number, perhaps 15,000,000, we will say to be generous, or even 20,000,000 are Catholics, but there are 105,000,000 left who are non-Catholics. We are not imposing any legislation upon the Catholics. We in no way try to inflict our ideas upon them. They have a perfect right to use the method of self-control if they wish; but we do believe that we have just as much right under the Constitution to enjoy health, peace, and the right to the pursuit of happiness as we see it.

"So I want to say that this whole group this morning, who have represented perhaps certain moral organizations of the country, seem to me to be like the boy who is whistling to keep up courage. No doubt there has been a falling away from grace, we might say, in the past several years, and they

who represent such moral standards must see that they have failed to a considerable extent when we consider that they have had so much power. They have had the laws with them, the wealth, the press, and yet they have come to-day to say they are afraid of the morals of their people if they have knowledge, if they do not continue to be kept in fear and ignorance. Then I say their moral teachings are not very deep. . . .

"We have birth control clinics that are legally operating throughout the United States, and in almost every one of the birth control clinics we have the same records. Regardless of religion, women come to us, desperate women, women trying to live decently, trying to avoid the conditions that unwanted pregnancy and too frequent pregnancy bring. These women come in equal proportions—about thirty-three percent Protestant, thirty-two per cent Catholics, and thirty-one per cent Jewish women. They all come with the same cry:

" 'Give us a chance to space our children. It is not that we do not love children, because we do love them; but because we want to give them a better chance than we have had, and we know that another child born into this family only deprives the children that are already here of a decent living with the ideals that we have for them.'

"When you get five hundred Catholic women in one clinic, with confessions of 597 abortions, Mr. Chairman, I say that it is time for us all to consider this problem intelligently. It is time for us all to consider a fundamental need, the fundamental question that is involved here. Catholic women are no different from any other women. It is all the same. The great majority of women who come to birth control clinics are seeking some means of controlling the size of their family because heretofore they have had to resort to these harmful methods. This is what we are trying to eliminate. We are trying to save mothers from this great hardship, from this unnatural ordeal. In the past many women who desired to control the size of their families have had to resort to an interruption of pregnancy, a method of which we disapprove,

and which this law is going to do away with eventually, I am quite certain.

"Mr. Chairman, we want children to be conceived in love, born of parents' conscious desire, and born into the world with healthy and sound bodies and sound minds."

That "doctor's bill," alas, died a premature death on March 4, 1931, still in the committee, with the expiration of the seventy-first Congress. But that does not mean that the work of the Committee for Federal Legislation for Birth Control is defeated. It means, on the other hand, that we must take up the work with renewed energy. It means that there is work that confronts every intelligent voter in this country. It means that we must organize the forces of intelligence to combat effectively the splendidly organized forces of reaction.

So it is that when I am congratulated now on recent victories such as the recent stand of the various Churches, representing Protestant acceptance of the moral integrity of birth control, or the statement of the New York Academy of Medicine, representing the approbation of the medical profession of the work accomplished in our clinics, I am made keenly aware that passive approval is not enough. We have, it is true, succeeded in enlightening public opinion. We have battered down the prejudice of the press. We have overcome the apathy and passive indifference of the medical profession. We have awakened the consciousness of the Protestant churches and their ethical leaders to the moral necessity of birth control. Yet this enlightenment, unless directed and applied, will be extinguished by the winds of dogmas unless it is applied like a hydro-electric power to the driving of the machinery of political and legislative action.

Life has taught me one supreme lesson. This is that we must—if we are really to *live* at all, if we are to enjoy the life more abundant promised by the Sages of Wisdom—we must put our convictions into action. My remuneration has been that I have been privileged to act out my faith.

I know that there is a growing class of intellectuals in America who believe that our national problems cannot be

satisfactorily solved by rallying people to some crusade that can be expressed in a symbol, a phrase, a definite set of principles, or a program. I know that these people give their passive and condescending approval of birth control. Sometimes it seems to me that these passive, intelligent, superior people, who cannot bring themselves to any such vulgar activity as voting, are more destructive than the forces of reaction. Heywood Broun calls our attention to the arch symbol of this type of contemporary liberal: the donkey stationed midway between two stacks of hay, spending his life trying to evaluate which was most desirable and eventually dying of starvation.

The problem of birth control in a national program concentrates all other political problems: the problems of taxation, of the care of defective and delinquents, of the standards of public education, of community life in general, of the demands made to support charities and community chests, of poverty and unemployment, of crime and the maintenance of prisons and penitentiaries, of child labor and unemployment. Therefore it is a problem that concerns in its intimate aspects every one of us, and in its remoter consequences the very life of the nation and the race.

To insure the ultimate victory through Congressional legislation, each and every voter of the United States may join in the work of the committee for federal legislation. Before I may claim that the battles for birth control have been brought to ultimate victory, I must enlist in this army every enlightened and intelligent voter of this republic. Together we shall march to the gates of victory.

THE END

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Dr. Halton made the following statement:

"The Committee visited every hospital in New York City, Manhattan Borough, in which women are treated as patients. Eye and ear hospitals, hospitals in which children only are treated, and other special hospitals were not included in the survey.

"In each instance the medical superintendent of the hospital was interviewed and asked to answer for the hospital. In a few instances in which the superintendent was either unwilling to answer or felt that he had not sufficient authority to answer, the president of the medical board was interviewed and gave the answer.

"The following question was asked at each hospital:

" 'We have come to you to ask for birth control information for some patients, if you can give it to them.

" 'We know that these patients can be legally aborted if they become pregnant, as they are suffering from advanced disease which would mean death to them if they attempted to give birth to a child.

" 'But therapeutic abortion in our cases would be insufficient to save life. Our patients are so advanced in kidney disease or in tuberculosis, that merely the incidence of pregnancy would mean a fatal termination to their lives. Can you, therefore, in order to save these women, instruct them in methods of contraception in order that they may live if they continue a normal wife's relation to her husband?'

"Each hospital, with the single exception of Mt. Sinai Hospital, refused to allow the patients to come, and each hospital said that under the present law it could not give such information to any such patients.

"Some superintendents went on to explain that if the hospital acceded to our request, its charter could be revoked and the doctor who gave the information would be subject to arrest.

"All the hospitals declared this information could not be given by the hospital either in the clinics or in the hospital itself in any official way. Some kindly superintendents suggested that we might go privately to some of the doctors of the hospital staff, and that on account of the urgency of the cases, they might be willing to break the law in their private offices.

"Many superintendents expressed themselves as willing to sign a petition for a change in the present law, since it can put such hardship on sick women.

"The following hospitals were interviewed:

Bellevue, and allied city hospitals, including Gouverneur and Harlem Hospitals
Neurological Hospital
French Hospital
German (now Hahneman) Hospital
Flower Hospital
Italian Hospital
Jewish Maternity Hospital
Knickerbocker Hospital
Lying-In Hospital
Manhattan Maternity Hospital
Misericordia Hospital
Mount Sinai Hospital
New York Hospital
New York Medical College and Hospital for Women (now called Community Hospital)
New York Nursery and Child's Hospital
People's Hospital

Post Graduate Medical School and Hospital
Presbyterian Hospital
The Park Hospital (formerly Red Cross Hospital)
Roosevelt Hospital and Vanderbilt Clinic
St. Ann's Maternity Hospital
St. Elizabeth Hospital
St. Luke's Hospital
St. Mark's Hospital
St. Vincent's Hospital
Sloan Hospital for Woman
Sydenham Hospital
Women's Hospital

APPENDIX B

BIRTH CONTROL CLINICS IN THE UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA:

Alameda County Health Department, Alameda, California
Child Hygiene Division, Los Angeles County Health Department.
Alhambra, California
Belvidere, California
Compton, California
Glendale, California
Alameda County Health Department, Hayward, California
Cedars of Lebanon Hospital, Out Patient Department
3942 Whittier Boulevard, Los Angeles
Los Angeles Mothers' Clinic
130 South Broadway, Los Angeles
Child Hygiene Division, Los Angeles County Health Department
Maravilla, California
Child Hygiene Division, Los Angeles County Health Department
Monrovia, California
Alameda County Birth Control League
5720 Genoa Street, Oakland, California
Pasadena Hospital Dispensary
38 Contress Street, Fairoaks Avenue, Oakland
Child Hygiene Division, Los Angeles County Health Department
Pomona
Child Hygiene Division, Los Angeles County Health Department
San Fernando
Maternal Health Committee, American University Women's Association
526 Oak Street, San Francisco
Canon Kips Eugenics Clinic
246 Second Street, San Francisco
Child Hygiene Division, Los Angeles County Health Department
Santa Monica

COLORADO:

Colorado General Hospital
4200 East 9th Street, Denver, Colorado

GEORGIA:

Grady Memorial Hospital, 101 East Butter Street, Atlanta

ILLINOIS:
Illinois Birth Control League
203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago
1347 Lincoln Street, Chicago
701 West 14th Street, Chicago
734 West 47th Street, Chicago
Social Service Equipment of Chicago, Lying-In Hospital Dispensary
3500 Douglas Boulevard, Chicago
818 Gelpin Street, Chicago
Jewish Social Service Bureau, 18 Selvin Street, Chicago
Mandel Clinic, Michael Reese Hospital
MARYLAND:
Committee on Contraceptive Advice, 1928 North Broadway, Baltimore
MICHIGAN:
Jewish Welfare Federation, 1691 Blaine Avenue, Detroit
MINNESOTA:
University Hospital Dispensary, Church and Union Streets, Minneapolis
NEW JERSEY:
New Jersey Birth Control League, 47 New Street, Newark
NEW YORK:
Brooklyn Hospital, DeKalb Avenue and Ashland Place
Jewish Hospital, Classon and St. Marks Avenues, Brooklyn
Long Island College Hospital, Brooklyn
Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau, New York
17 West 16th Street 2352 Seventh Avenue
Lebanon Hospital, Caldwell and Westchester Avenues, New York
Lenox Hill Hospital, 112 East 77th Street, New York
Mt. Sinai Hospital, 100th Street and Madison Avenue
New York Infirmary for Women and Children
321 East 15th Street, New York
New York Nursery and Child's Hospital, 161 West 61st Street, New York
Post Graduate Hospital, 21st Street and Second Avenue, New York
Union Health Center, 131 East 17th Street, New York
Vanderbilt Clinic, Broadway and 168th Street, New York
Women's Hospital, Stuyvesant Square East, New York
Grasslands Hospital, Valhalla
OHIO:
Christ Hospital, 2139 Auburn Avenue, Cincinnati
Cincinnati General Hospital, Burnet Avenue and Goodman Street
Jewish Hospital, Burnet Avenue, Cincinnati
Maternal Health Association, 609 Osborn Building, Cleveland
PENNSYLVANIA:
Medical and Lay Group, 69th and Market Streets, Philadelphia
TEXAS:
Private Clinic, 911 Medical Arts Building, San Antonio
VIRGINIA:
University of Virginia Hospital, Charlottesville
CLINICS IN PROCESS OF ORGANIZATION:
Little Rock Arkansas
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Kansas City, Missouri
Washington, D. C.

APPENDIX C

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT ON BIRTH CONTROL OF THE COMMITTEE ON MARRIAGE AND THE HOME OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AMERICA

"As to the necessity, therefore, for some form of effective control of the size of the family and spacing of children, and consequently of control of conception, there can be no question. It is recognized by all churches and all physicians.

"There is general agreement also that sex union between husbands and wives as an expression of mutual affection, without relation to procreation, is right. This is recognized by the Scriptures, by all branches of the Christian Church, by social and medical science, and by the good sense and idealism of mankind.

"As to the method of control of conception, two ways are possible. One is the use of contraceptives, or methods other than abstinence, which may be classified as such. The other is self-control or abstinence for longer or shorter periods of time. Both may be considered as forms of birth control."

"Whatever the final conclusions may be, the Committee is strongly of the opinion that the Church should not seek to impose its point of view as to the use of contraceptives upon the public by legislation or any other form of coercion; and especially should not seek to prohibit physicians from imparting such information to those who in the judgment of the medical profession are entitled to receive it."

"A majority of the Committee holds that the careful and restrained use of contraceptives by married people is valid and moral. They take this position because they believe that it is important to provide for the proper spacing of children, the control of the size of the family, and the protection of mothers and children; and because intercourse between mates, when an expression of their spiritual union and affection, is right in itself."

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE NEW YORK ACADEMY OF MEDICINE

(April, 1930; given to the press April 21, 1931.)

1. Medical colleges and hospital clinics should give instruction in control of conception.

2. Hospitals and dispensaries should continue or organize birth control clinics wherever the service is needed.

3. There is need of the special birth control clinic. Clinics outside of hospitals should have a staff of doctors trained in the treatment of the disorders of women, with a board in active control made up of specialists in gynecology and obstetrics of recognized standing, who will make regular inspections. With diagnosis and supervision properly provided, such outside clinics should receive the endorsement of the medical profession until hospital clinics meet this public health need.

4. Federal and state law should be changed to make "existing inhibitions inapplicable to duly licensed physicians, . . . dispensaries and to the public health authorities, . . . in protecting the health of their patients or of the community."

5. "The absence of education of the public in sexual matters by the medical profession is medieval."

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